Shonen Magazine Comics

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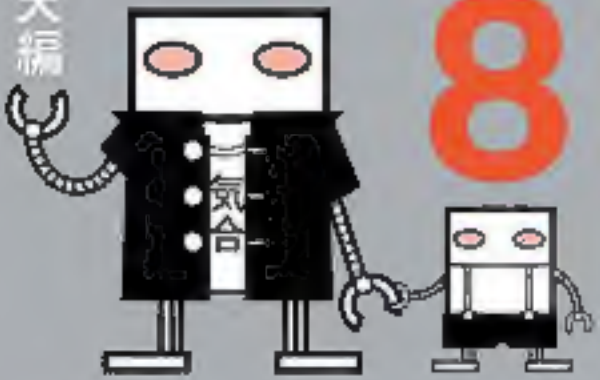

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL

by EIJI NONAKA

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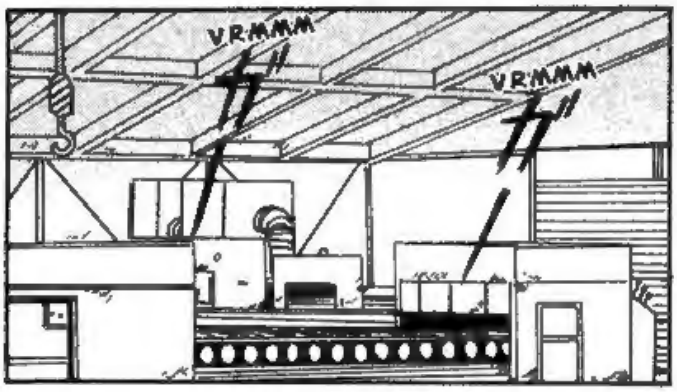
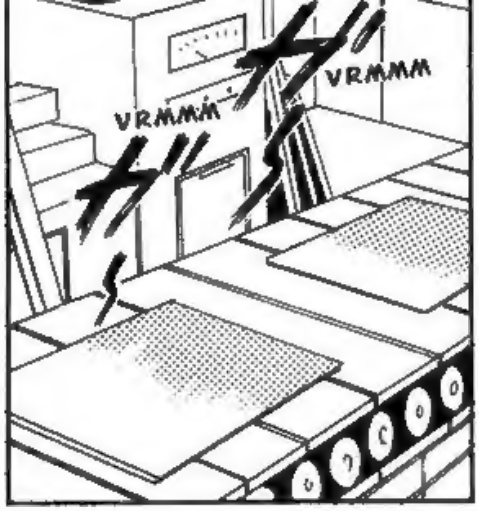
CHAPTER 163: **MEN AT WORK**

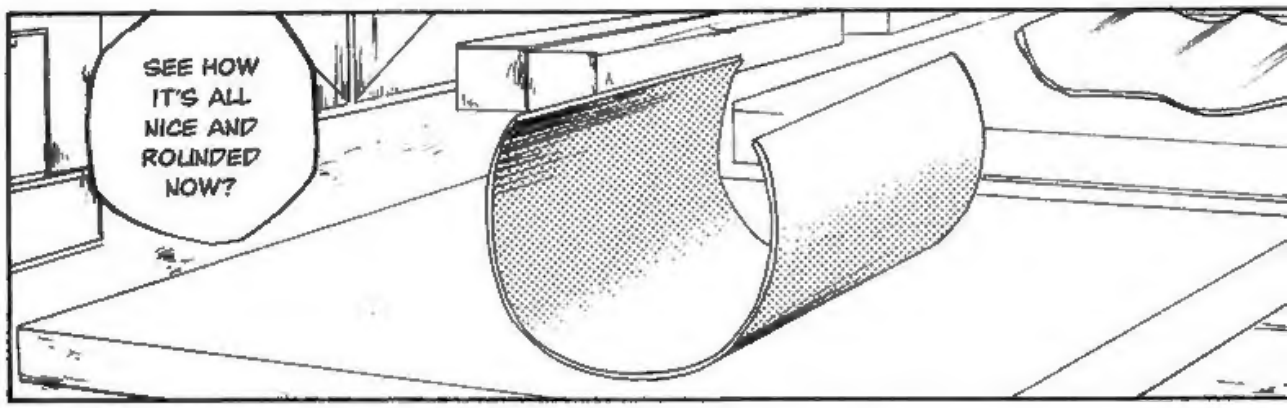



VRMMM
VRMMM

WELL, WHY DON'T I SHOW YOU HOW IT'S DONE? WATCH CLOSE.
I'M STILL JUST A BEGINNER, BUT I'LL DO MY BEST.

AND GIVE IT A WHACK WITH THE OLD HAMMER.
CLANG
CLANG

JUST GRAB ONE OF THOSE METAL SHEETS FROM OVER THERE...


SEE HOW IT'S ALL NICE AND ROUNDED NOW?

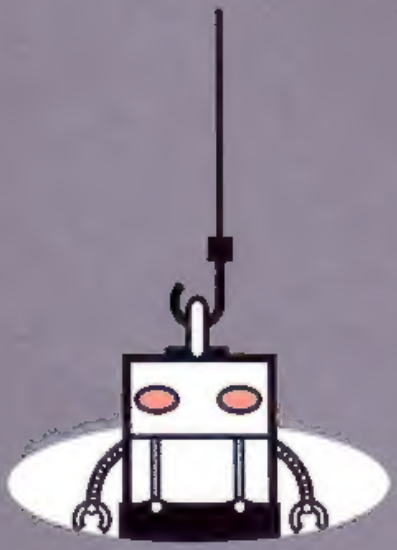
SPKK
SPKK
THAT'S WHEN YOU PASS IT ON OVER TO THE WELDERS. THEY'LL SEAL IT UP FOR YA.

NEXT, STICK TWO OF THESE LIGHTS ON HERE...
THERE'S ONE THAT'S ALREADY WELDED.
CHAK
AND THEN PUT ONE OF THESE HOSES ON EITHER SIDE.
WELL, I BEEN ON THIS JOB 10 YEARS NOW AND I STILL HAVEN'T LOST ANY OF MY ORIGINAL DRIVE. THE MOST IMPORTANT THING IS THAT YOU GIVE IT YOUR ALL AND YOU STICK WITH IT.
IT SEEMS THIS WILL TAKE SOME GETTING USED TO.

THERE YOU HAVE IT—HOW TO MAKE A MECHAZAWA.

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL

WINNER OF THE Kodansha Manga Award



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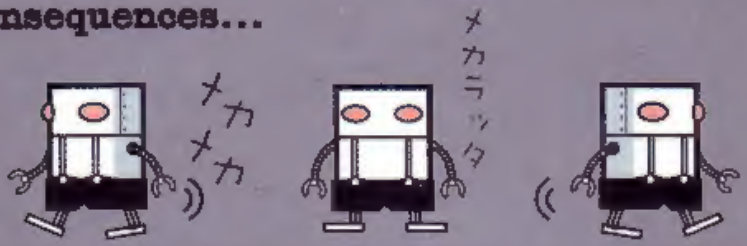
— IGN.com

Hokuto's desperate struggle to come up with a Really Interesting Story is nothing compared to the shadow of despair that has fallen upon Cromartie High! Masked Takenouchi wrestles with the right time to unveil his latest guise, while the real Takenouchi challenges his inner demons to push his motion sickness to the limit. Meanwhile, Kamiyama's attempt to infuse the school's evacuation drill with a sense of urgency leads to dire consequences...



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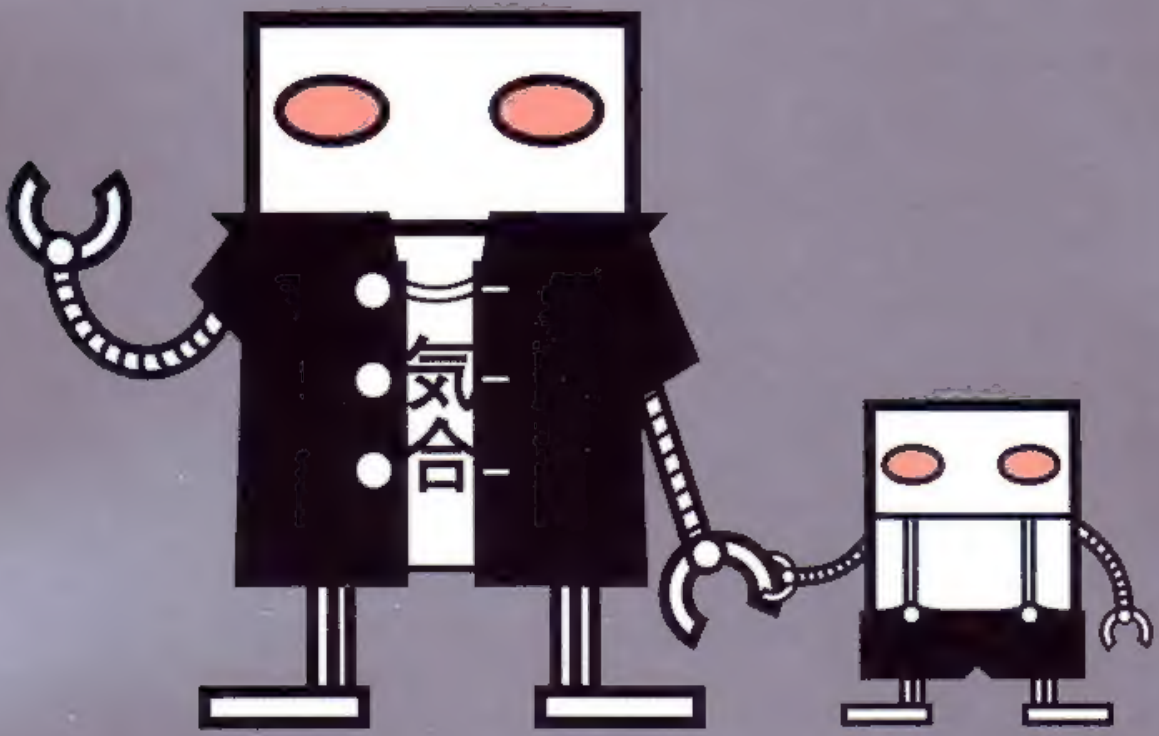
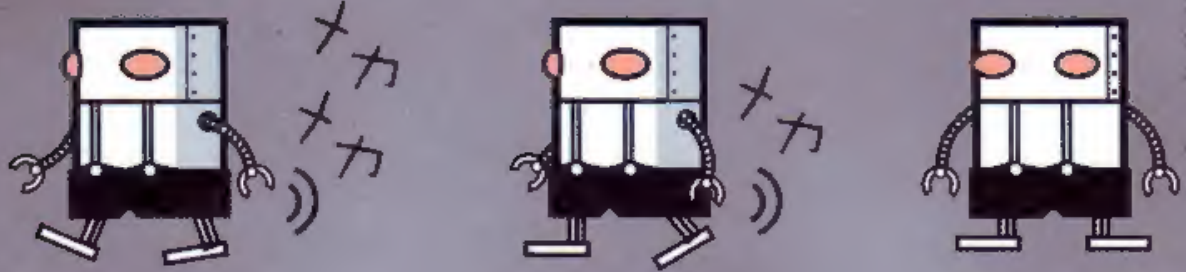
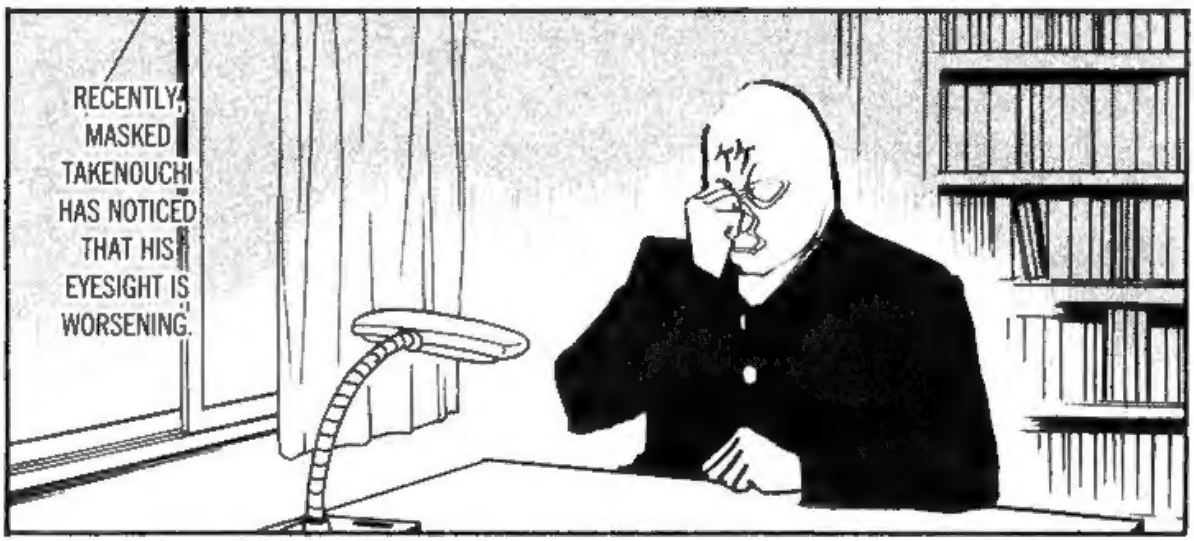
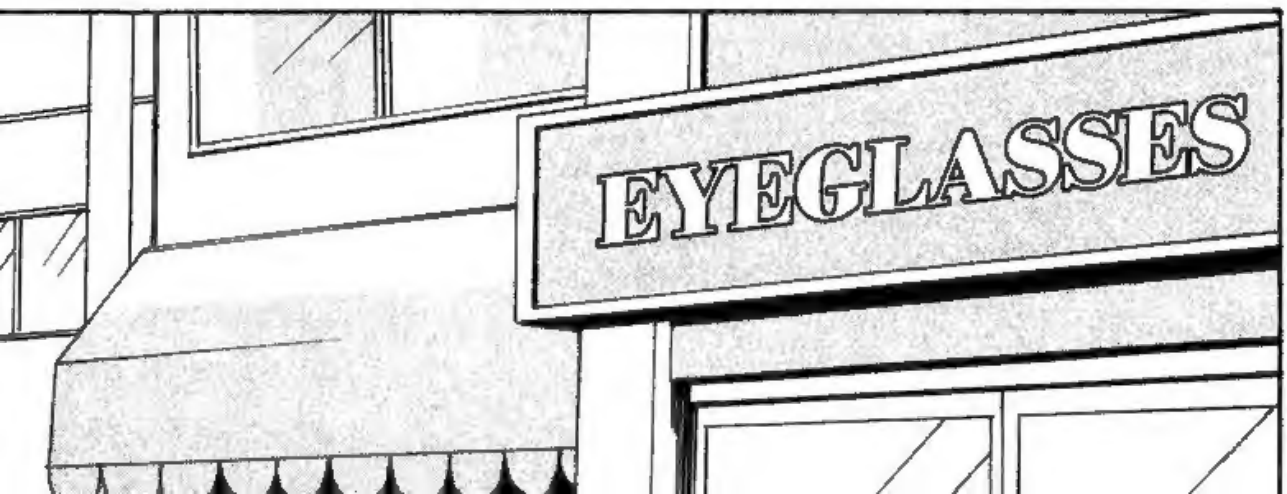




Eiji Nonaka

CHAPTER 164: **I'M LOOKING THROUGH YOU**





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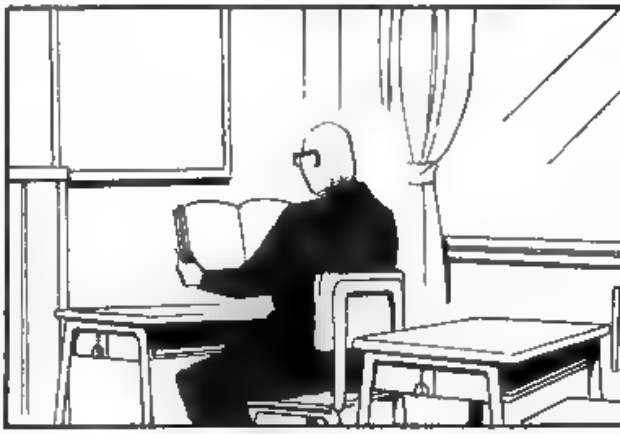
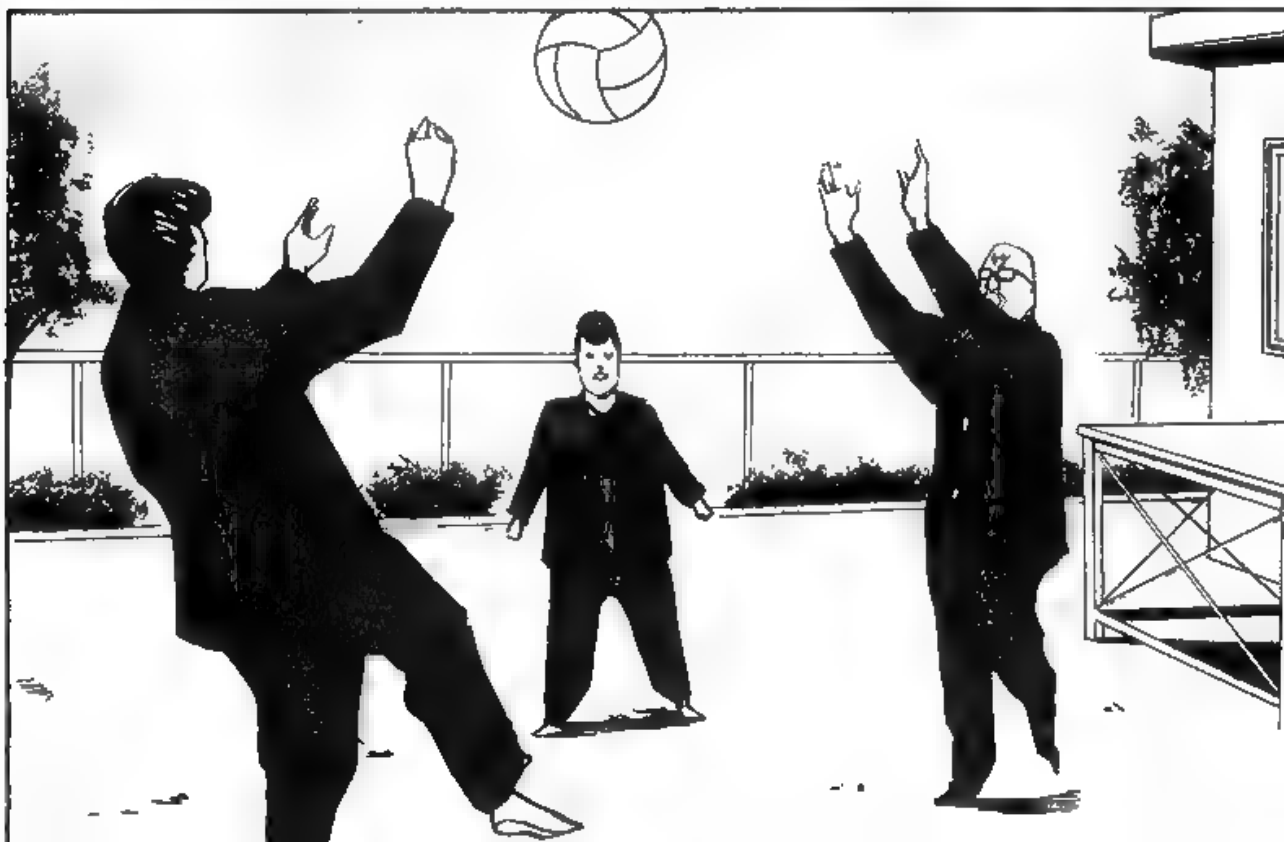




SQK
SQK
HWFF
YES, WHAT IS IT?
HEY, YOU GOT A MINUTE?
HUH?
I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL AND ALL...
UH...

THAT BIT WITH THE VOLLEYBALL WAS WHAT DID IT.

CHAPTER 165: **KING OF PAIN**

IT'S NOT LIKE WE CAN GO BARGIN' IN THERE, THOUGH. THOSE GUYS ARE PRETTY TOUGH.
THOSE PUNKS OVER AT BASS HAVE THROWN DOWN AND ARE CHALLENGIN' US TO A FIGHT.
THE THUGS OF MANUEL HIGH SCHOOL

WHAT'S MORE, THEY CALL THAT SETOUCHI GUY WHO LEADS 'EM "THE LORD OF DESTRUCTION" OR SOMETHING. NOT LONG AGO HE TOOK ON FIVE DUDES FROM DESTRADE. TWO OF THEM ENDED UP HAVIN' TO GO TO THE HOSPITAL.

ONCE YOU'VE MADE UP YOUR MIND TO FIGHT, THE ONLY THING TO DO IS TO **DO** IT! WHY THE HELL ARE YOU TRYIN' TO LOOK FOR A WAY OUT?! DAMN!
THERE'S NO BUT'S ABOUT IT, MORON!
HUH? B-BUT...

GET THIS INTO YOUR HEADS: BEIN' A BADASS MEANS YOU OPERATE ON **INSTINCT**! QUIT THINKIN' ABOUT THINGS SO MUCH! YOU GOT IT?!
ONCE YOU START TALKIN' CRAP LIKE "WHAT SHOULD WE DO?" OR "MAYBE WE SHOULD THINK ABOUT THIS A LITTLE MORE," ALL YOU'RE DOING IS BRINGIN' YOURSELVES DOWN!

YUP.
HE'S AS SCARY AS ALWAYS, HUH?

. . . . . .
I'VE HAD IT WITH ALL THIS STUPID TALK. I'M OUT.

NOW THEN...

PIASURU
COIN
GAME
Cyber chat

PERSONAL COMPUTERS
SPECIAL PRICES ON LCD SCREENS!
WHICH ONE SHOULD I GET?
CLOSEOUT SALE
FP-IIMUTR
HMM, I CAN'T DECIDE...
THIS ONE DOES HAVE A DVD-R BUT IT'S ONE OF THOSE SLIM TOWERS, SO THERE'S NO ROOM FOR ME TO INSTALL A VIDEO CARD. AND THAT ONE OVER THERE'S GOT EVERYTHING, BUT IT'S JUST TOO PRICEY.
THIS ONE'S GOT A GOOD PROCESSOR AND NICE-SIZED HARD DRIVE, BUT IT DOESN'T HAVE A DVD-R.
SALE
TODAY I'LL JUST TAKE SOME PAM-PHLETS HOME.
ALRIGHT! I'VE MADE UP MY MIND!

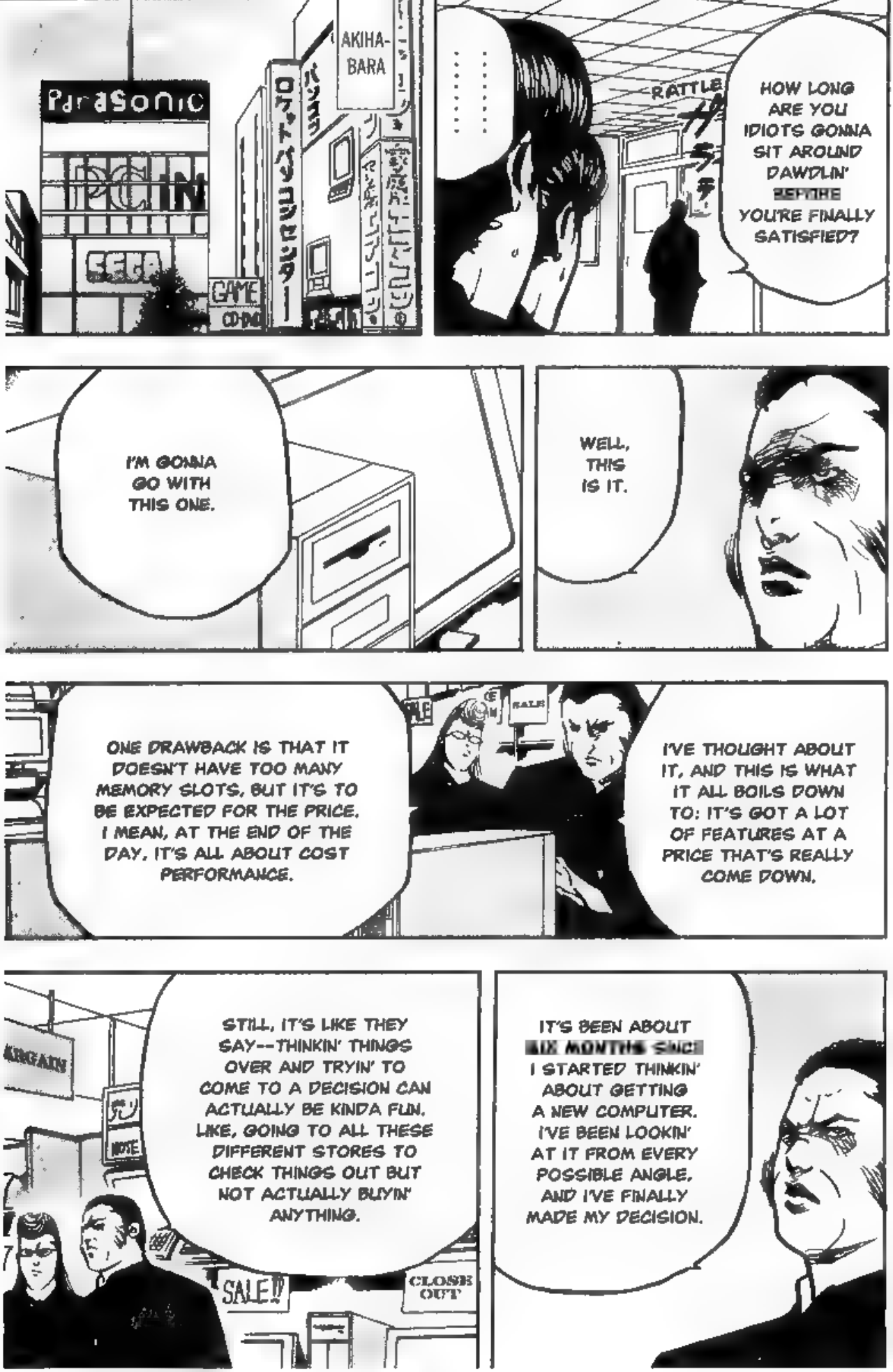
YEAH, WHAT?
SAY, FUJI-MOTO?

THE NEXT DAY

THIS IS **BASS** WE'RE TALKIN' ABOUT, SO INSTEAD OF JUST RUSHIN' OVER THERE, WE THINK THE BEST THING TO DO IS TO WAIT FOR THE RIGHT TIME.
WE'VE BEEN THINKIN' ABOUT THAT FIGHT THING FROM BEFORE, AND WE DECIDED... WELL, WOULDN'T IT BE BETTER TO HOLD OFF FOR A BIT?

HUH?

WHAT'S THERE TO HOLD YOU BACK, HUH? YOU'VE ONLY GOT TWO CHOICES: DO IT OR DON'T. AND IF THAT'S THE CASE, THE ONLY THING TO DO IS TO FRICKIN' DO IT! I THINK YOU BASTARDS ARE JUST SCARED!
HOW MANY TIMES DO I GOTTA SAY IT BEFORE YOU UNDERSTAND? YOU NEED TO QUIT ALL THIS THINKIN' AND DILLYDALLYIN' AND SHIT AND JUST DO IT!


Panasonic
PC-IN
SEGA
GAME
AKIHA-
BARA
RATTLE
HOW LONG ARE YOU IDIOTS GONNA SIT AROUND DAWDLIN' BEFORE YOU'RE FINALLY SATISFIED?
I'M GONNA GO WITH THIS ONE.
WELL, THIS IS IT.
ONE DRAWBACK IS THAT IT DOESN'T HAVE TOO MANY MEMORY SLOTS, BUT IT'S TO BE EXPECTED FOR THE PRICE. I MEAN, AT THE END OF THE DAY, IT'S ALL ABOUT COST PERFORMANCE.
I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT, AND THIS IS WHAT IT ALL BOILS DOWN TO: IT'S GOT A LOT OF FEATURES AT A PRICE THAT'S REALLY COME DOWN.
BARGAIN
NOTE
STILL, IT'S LIKE THEY SAY--THINKIN' THINGS OVER AND TRYIN' TO COME TO A DECISION CAN ACTUALLY BE KINDA FUN. LIKE, GOING TO ALL THESE DIFFERENT STORES TO CHECK THINGS OUT BUT NOT ACTUALLY BUYIN' ANYTHING.
SALE!!
CLOSE OUT
IT'S BEEN ABOUT SIX MONTHS SINCE I STARTED THINKIN' ABOUT GETTING A NEW COMPUTER. I'VE BEEN LOOKIN' AT IT FROM EVERY POSSIBLE ANGLE, AND I'VE FINALLY MADE MY DECISION.

WHAT?!

HOWEVER, THE FOLLOWING DAYS BROUGHT WITH THEM A SHOCKING TURN OF EVENTS.

DAMN! I TOTALLY BLEW IT!
THE PC HE'D BOUGHT JUST THREE DAYS EARLIER WENT ON SALE FOR HALF PRICE
SLASHING PRICES! WAS: 120,000 YEN NOW: 60,000 YEN

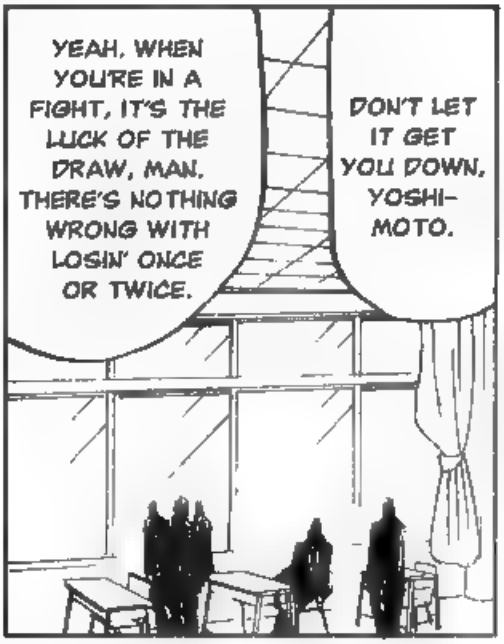
I DIDN'T GET ENOUGH INFORMATION BEFORE I MADE MY PURCHASE. DAMMIT, WHAT A STUPID MISTAKE!
IT'S COMMON KNOWLEDGE THAT COMPUTER PRICES CAN DROP PRETTY QUICKLY, SO I ALREADY HAD THAT IN MIND. BUT STILL...I NEVER THOUGHT IT WOULD DROP TO HALF PRICE JUST THREE DAYS LATER!

NO. IT'S MORE LIKE, I SPENT SIX MONTHS TRYIN' TO COME TO A DECISION, SO I SHOULD'VE JUST WAITED ANOTHER WEEK! YEAH, I SHOULD'VE SPENT **MORE** TIME TRYIN' TO MAKE UP MY MIND! ACTUALLY, I THINK I HAD THE MOST FUN WHEN I WAS LOOKING AT ALL THE SMALL DETAILS AND TRYIN' TO COME TO A DECISION.
I SPENT SIX MONTHS THINKING AND WORRYING OVER THIS...DOES THIS MEAN ALL THAT TIME WAS FOR NOTHING?!

FUJI-
MOTO!
YOU WERE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT. JUST DOING SOMETHING WITHOUT THINKIN' ABOUT IT TOO MUCH IS THE WAY TO GO!
WE JUST CAME BACK FROM BASS! WE MADE UP OUR MINDS AND BAM, WENT OVER THERE AND STUCK IT TO 'EM!
WE'VE BEEN ACTING LIKE FOOLS UP TILL NOW, WORRYING OVER EVERY LITTLE THING, HUH? HA HA!
THEY'RE ALL NURSIN' BLACK EYES RIGHT NOW!
THOSE BASS GUYS WERE KINDA HESITATING, BUT WE RUSHED IN AND TOTALLY KICKED THEIR ASSES!
YOU GOTTA QUIT WORRYIN' ABOUT THE DETAILS AND JUST DO IT!
YOU WERE RIGHT ALL ALONG, FUJIMOTO.

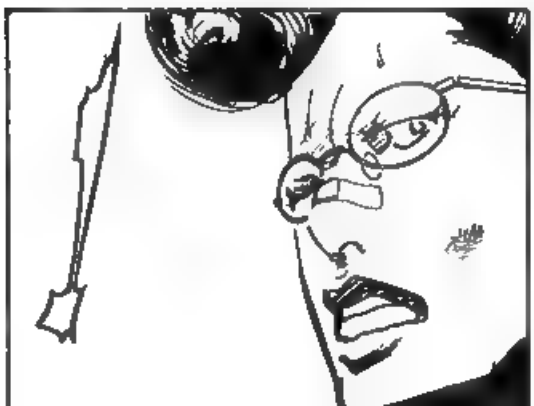
BE A MAN—HAVE TROUBLE MAKING UP YOUR MIND!

CHAPTER 166: **HOLD ME NOW**


YEAH, WHEN YOU'RE IN A FIGHT, IT'S THE LUCK OF THE DRAW, MAN. THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH LOSIN' ONCE OR TWICE.
DON'T LET IT GET YOU DOWN, YOSHI-MOTO.

IT'S, LIKE, AGAINST THE RULES. IF HE'D COME AT YOU FROM THE FRONT, YOU DEFINITELY WOULD'VE BEATEN HIM!
YEAH, AMBUSHIN' YOU LIKE THAT WAS PRETTY LOW.
TRUTHFULLY, THOUGH, I DON'T FEEL LIKE I LOST. HEH.

I'VE GOT HALF A MIND TO GO SMACK HIM ONE IN RETURN! AAH, WHATEVER. IT'D BE STUPID TO GO AND TAKE ON A LITTLE PISSANT LIKE HIM!
YOU GOT THAT RIGHT!

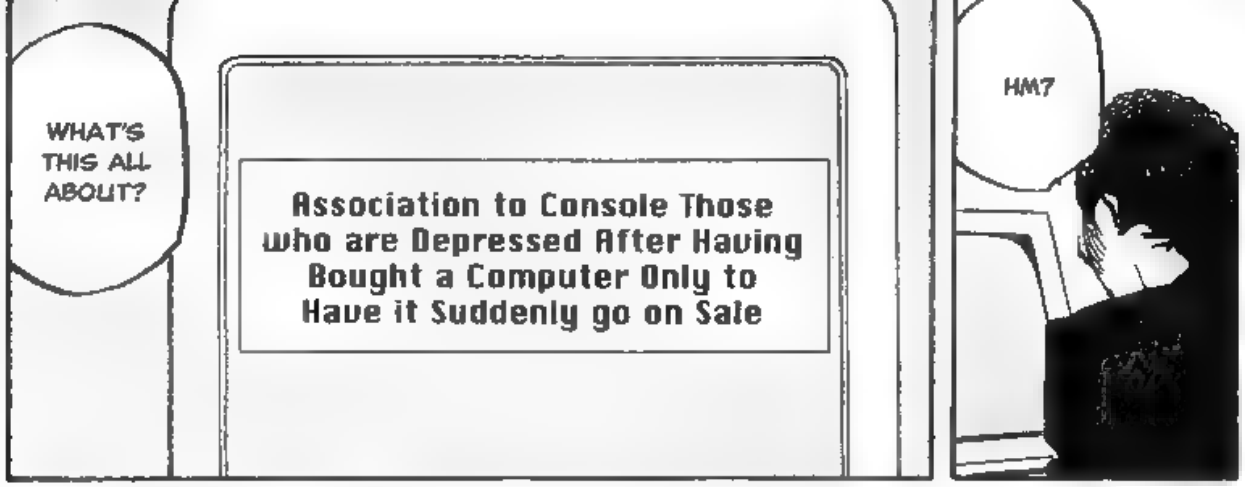


FUJIMOTO!
WHAT DO YOU IDIOTS THINK YOU'RE DOING?!

SO WHAT IF HE HIT YOU WITH A SUCKER PUNCH? THERE'S NO RULES IN FIGHTING, SO HOW THE HELL ARE YOU GONNA CALL SOMETHIN' "AGAINST THE RULES"? WHAT ARE YOU, A BUNCH OF KIDS?!
SITTIN' AROUND LICKIN' EACH OTHER'S WOUNDS...LISTEN UP, MAGGOT: YOU LOST. QUIT COMIN' UP WITH STUPID EXCUSES.

. . . . . .
LISTENIN' TO YOU DIRTBAGS MAKES ME WANNA **PUKE**.
YOU'RE ALL JUST COMIN' UP WITH EXCUSES FOR WHY HE LOST TO TRY AND MAKE HIM FEEL BETTER. WHAT THE HELL GOOD IS THAT GONNA DO?!

HE'S GOT A POINT, THOUGH.
THAT FUJIMOTO'S STILL AS SCARY AS EVER, HUH?
I'LL SAY IT AGAIN-- YOU LOST, ASSHOLE. THAT'S ALL THERE IS TO IT.
RATTLE
SO...
I CAN'T EVEN GET ATTACHED TO THE THING. IT'S LIKE, I POWER IT UP AND...NOTHIN'. I DON'T FEEL A THING.
AFTER I SPENT ALL THAT TIME TRYIN' TO MAKE MY DECISION, THE PC I ENDED UP GETTIN' WENT ON SALE FOR HALF PRICE JUST THREE DAYS LATER. I'VE BEEN PRETTY DEPRESSED ABOUT THAT LATELY.
I...I WANNA BE COMFORTED! I WANT SOMEONE TO CONSOLE ME! I MEAN, HALF PRICE AFTER JUST THREE DAYS?! THAT'S PLAYIN' PRETTY DIRTY, RIGHT? IT'S, LIKE, AGAINST THE RULES!
STILL, I WAS UP AND CONNECTED TO THE INTERNET IN NO TIME.


WHAT'S THIS ALL ABOUT?
Association to Console Those who are Depressed After Having Bought a Computer Only to Have it Suddenly go on Sale
HM?

Username: Ko-chi
Thanks so much

It's me again. Thanks so much for the kind words. I'll try to use this as a learning experience, and--as a PC user--keep a positive outlook as I strive toward a better tomorrow.

Username: School Devil
To Ko-chi

Hello, and welcome. This sort of thing happens practically every day. Everyone's been through it at one time or another. Please, don't let it get you down.

Username: Ko-chi
Nice to meet you all

Hello everyone. I bought a PC just last week, and today it's on sale for a LOT cheaper. It was a pretty big shock for me...

LOOK AT 'EM! THEY'RE SITTIN' AROUND, LICKIN' EACH OTHER'S WOUNDS AND TRYIN' TO MAKE THEMSELVES FEEL BETTER AND NOT GIVING A DAMN ABOUT HOW IT LOOKS! CAN YOU BELIEVE THAT?!
THIS...THIS BOARD'S NOTHIN' BUT A BUNCH OF GUYS WHO'VE GOTTEN ALL DEPRESSED AFTER THE COMPUTER THEY JUST BOUGHT WENT ON SALE!

YEAH, THAT'LL DO IT. THESE PEOPLE HERE, THEY'VE BEEN THROUGH THE SAME THING I HAVE. I'M SURE THEY'LL BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND MY SADNESS.
"HELLO. MY NAME IS 11 P.M. I, TOO, BOUGHT A COMPUTER THAT IN JUST THREE DAYS WENT ON SALE FOR HALF PRICE."
CHK
CHK
I'M GONNA TYPE SOMETHING RIGHT NOW.

Username: Katchan
To 11 p.m.

In my case, the computer I bought went on sale the very next day. ::sob:: And not only was it half price, they threw in a DVD-R! Without even meaning to, I burst into tears right there in the store. So anyway, I'd say you came out ahead of me. ^_^;; I think it will help if you remember you're not the only one who's been through such a saddening experience--everyone else here has as well, and we all get together to try and help one another. If things start getting too bad for you, feel free to come by again. And your posts don't have to be just about computers. All of us here use this forum as a way of helping to cope with things. Well, see you again. :)

"FOR A WHILE THERE, I HAD ABANDONED MYSELF TO DESPAIR. I WAS STARTING TO FEEL AS DISGUSTED WITH MYSELF AS WITH THIS COMPUTER I'D JUST BOUGHT. I REALLY AM GLAD TO HAVE FOUND THIS FORUM. PEOPLE HELPING OTHER PEOPLE--I THINK IT'S GREAT."
CHK
CHK
"THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR KIND REPLY."

"AT FIRST, I REALLY REGRET-TED HAVING BOUGHT SUCH AN EXPENSIVE PC..."

CHK CHK

"BUT IT WAS BY BUYING THAT PC THAT I MANAGED TO MEET ALL OF YOU HERE AND WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT LIKE THAT, IT DOESN'T SEEM SO EXPENSIVE ANYMORE. HMM, THAT SOUNDS A LITTLE LIKE I'M STILL TRYING TO RATIONALIZE MY PURCHASE (LOL). ANYWAY, SEE YOU ALL AGAIN."

IT SURE IS GREAT WHEN PEOPLE HELP ONE ANOTHER.

I GUESS IT'S TRUE-- PEOPLE CAN'T GO THROUGH LIFE ON THEIR OWN.

THE NEXT DAY

WHEN I THINK ABOUT IT LIKE THAT, I GET THE FEELING I WAS A LITTLE TOO HARD ON THOSE GUYS. ALL HE DID WAS LOSE A FIGHT.

AS SOMEONE WHO'S IN A HIGHER POSITION THAN THEY ARE, I OUGHTTA SAY SOMETHIN' NICE TO 'EM ONCE IN A WHILE. IT'S JUST GONNA BRING THINGS DOWN IF I'M COLD AND UNFEELING ALL THE TIME.

HEY.

AH!

FUJIMOTO!

UH, N-NO, I'M THE ONE WHO SHOULD APOLOGIZE. I WAS SITTING AROUND WHINING BECAUSE I LOST IN A FIGHT. I SHOULD BE ASHAMED OF MYSELF.
LOOK, I'M SORRY ABOUT YESTERDAY. I WENT A LITTLE TOO FAR.
NAH, ALL OUR SHIT'S PRETTY BORING.
AND YOU ALL, WHAT'S WITH THE LONG FACES? DAMN, DOESN'T ANYBODY HAVE AN INTERESTING STORY OR SOMETHIN' THEY CAN TELL?
YEAH. HE'S A LOT KINDER THAN USUAL.
HEY, FUJIMOTO SURE IS ACTING DIFFERENT TODAY, HUH?
YEAH. DEEP DOWN INSIDE, HE'S A NICE GUY AFTER ALL.
MAN, FUJIMOTO'S COMPLETELY DIFFERENT! IT'S LIKE HE'S REALLY LOOKIN' OUT FOR US.
FINE, TELL ME A BORING STORY. THAT'S WHAT CHATTING IS ALL ABOUT, RIGHT? JUST SWAPPING STUPID STORIES. SOMETIMES, DOIN' THAT CAN HELP YOU FORGET THE BAD STUFF THAT'S GOIN' ON IN YOUR LIFE.
JUST TELL IT.
IT'S NOT THAT BIG A DEAL, THOUGH...
GO AHEAD. I'M MORE PARTIAL TO LOW-KEY STORIES ANYWAY.
I'VE GOT A STORY, BUT IT'S REALLY BORING.

THAT GUY WOULDN'T HAVE BROUGHT IT TO SCHOOL WITH HIM, THOUGH.

The *Shaboten* in question

HIS NEW EDITOR IS THE PERSON WHO CANCELLED *SHABOTEN*!

NONAKA IN A BIND!

Is the reckless violence of *Cromartie* next?

A few days ago, *Shukan Shonen Magazine*, the periodical in which we're published serially, got a new editor in chief, and according to our research, it is this individual who was behind the decision to cancel *Shaboten*. (Incidentally, *Shaboten* is another work by *Cromartie High School* author Eiji Nonaka.) Upon *Cromartie* beginning its run in *Shukan Shonen Magazine*, Nonaka was filled with aspirations of bestowing the stuff of dreams upon his young readers--but tragedy struck when *Shaboten*, which was running in a certain other magazine, was abruptly cancelled. Nonaka has recurring memories of having written (and being chastised for it) "Ha! They cancelled *Shaboten*!" in the margins of artwork for *Cromartie High*. Currently, all of us here find ourselves in the depths of anxiety and despair as we wonder what we'd do if *Cromartie* were next. This is no laughing matter, and as such, we've launched a movement to ensure that *Cromartie* doesn't get the axe.

First off, why was *Shaboten* cancelled? The answer to that holds the key to our current dilemma. It was with no small amount of trepidation that we posed the question directly to our new editor--to which the answer was a rather pleased-sounding, "It's run its course."

Author Eiji Nonaka, shocked by this cruel twist of fate (or rather, by this sudden change in personnel)

クロマティ高校校内新聞
THE CROMARTIE GAZETTE
Published By The Cromartie Newspaper Club

It's run its course. One could easily imagine this being said of *Cromartie High School* as well. In fact, we can't come up with a shorter, more succinct reason for it being green-lit for cancellation. After we'd stopped to think about it for a bit, we realized that pulling the plug on *Shaboten* may have been the right thing to do--but we couldn't just give up! We had to do something, *anything* to make sure the same thing didn't happen to *Cromartie*, even if it made the story not so interesting.

After we'd gone through all our ideas and still didn't know what to do, we decided to go to our editor with the idea of making the next issue of the magazine a *Cromartie* special (I think that's what we called it) complete with a full-color insert. We could even run an emergency new installment of *Shaboten*. (Wait, we can't do that--it was cancelled!) Actually, though, I think the idea of those extra pages could have had a less-than-desired effect. Yeah, that may have been a mistake.

Incidentally, the details of our great plan were as follows: for the first time ever, a full-color *Cromartie* splash page; an introduction to some incredibly manly *Cromartie* promotional goods; two wholly separate stories within the same book; an all-new installment of *Shaboten*; in a bold move, a very special gift for our readers; the *Cromartie* newspaper--an appeal to the editor; and "Wanted: The Delinquent Designed by YOU."

The protagonist (in name, at least) of *Cromartie High School* is also surprised by this turn of events: is truth stranger than manga?

Tama-chan the seal showing up in the Arakawa River, masked men being elected into the Japanese parliament *Cromartie High School* is truly a manga that stays one step ahead of the times. In fact, if we wanted to really start bending things, we could (probably) describe it as "a profound work, a comic that defines the cutting edge of manga for our time." In spite of this, it finds itself facing a grave menace indeed--the questionnaire.

Some other ideas of ours "Wanted Songs to Show Your Support for *Cromartie High*", "The Area Outside the Panels Goes to Someone Else", and "Eiji Nonaka to Increase His Drive by Thirty Percent! (In comparison to his previous work for this company)" Not bad, eh? But will it be enough to sway the heart of our new editor?"

Shonen Magazine Issue 23 featured a major reader questionnaire with such categories as "Which manga would you not care if we discontinued?" and "Which manga do you flip past without reading?" In both of these categories, *Cromartie High School* beat out the competition by a margin of two-to-one to take the No. 1 spot! (Not a joke.)

Down-with-questionnaires! They-use-numbers-to justify-BULLYING! Bullying-is-UNCOOL!

That's right! That's the kind of spirit we need to support this manga!

Woo-hoo! We're No. 1! We...huh? Hey, what the hell, you guys?! (Sob.) Aah, whatever. As of now, we are staunchly anti-questionnaire! At least put in a question like, "Which manga do you forget to read if you don't happen to run across it?"

We can bounce back from this! Everyone show your support for *Cromartie High*! Our rallying cry "It's run its course."

(Originally published in Issue 27 of *Shukan Shonen Magazine* 2003)

So there you have it. We have a new editor at *Shukan Shonen Magazine* now, and he's the one who decided to cancel *Shaboten*. Of course, this means that now we're playing for keeps. I rather pointedly chose to include a new installment of *Shaboten*, but our new editor didn't say anything. It looked like he wanted to say something, but he kept his mouth closed. He hasn't really said much since then. In fact, he hasn't said a single thing to us at all! That ain't right!

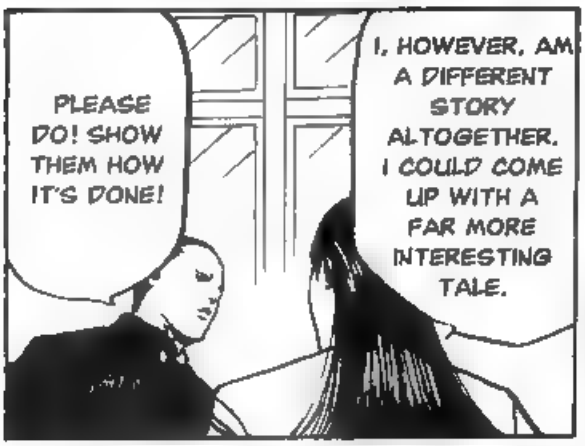
The results of that questionnaire were real, too. So it's like we're popular, but not. I've been accused of doing this as a joke, but why would I go through all *this* just to make a joke? It's the truth--and that's what makes it funny, idiot!

By the way, the installment of *Shaboten* that ran in that issue was quite well received.

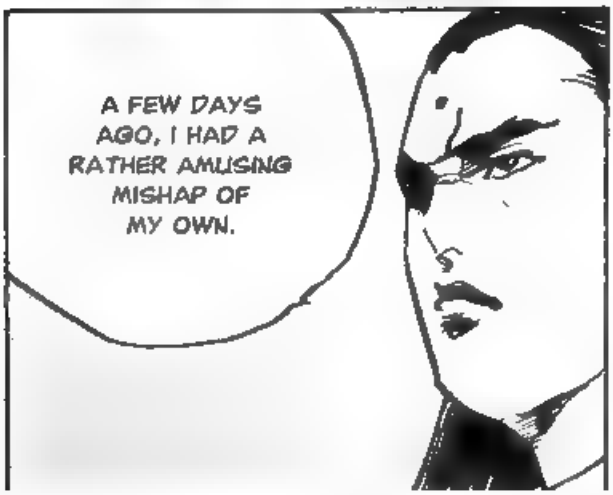
CHAPTER 167: **SAY SAY SAY**

AND I ACCIDENTALLY CALLED MY DAD "TEACHER"! EVERYONE TOTALLY MADE FUN OF ME FOR IT.
EVERYONE, LISTEN TO THIS. I WAS EATIN' DINNER WITH MY FAMILY LAST WEEK...

DRIVEL.


PLEASE DO! SHOW THEM HOW IT'S DONE!
I, HOWEVER, AM A DIFFERENT STORY ALTOGETHER. I COULD COME UP WITH A FAR MORE INTERESTING TALE.

THEY'RE A BUNCH OF SIMPLE-TONS.
WA HA HA
THESE "JOKES" ARE NOTHING MORE THAN EVERYDAY OCCUR-RENCES. PITIFUL.


A FEW DAYS AGO, I HAD A RATHER AMUSING MISHAP OF MY OWN.

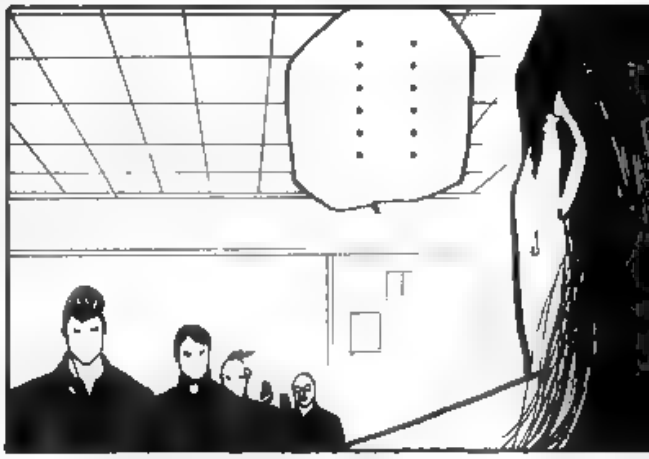
DO YOU MIND?
WA-HA-HA

ALRIGHT, NOW LISTEN UP! THE OTHER DAY, I...
INDEED. I'M ON AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT LEVEL FROM YOU BASTARDS
IS THIS STORY REALLY GONNA BE INTERESTING?
UH...
WELL?
. . . . . .
WHAT?!
I FORGOT.
. . . . . .
STOP YOUR WHINING, IMBECILE!
BUT IF YOU FORGOT, DOESN'T THAT MEAN IT WASN'T SO INTERESTING?
AH, YES, THAT DOES HAPPEN.
I REMEMBERED UP TILL JUST A MOMENT AGO, BUT THEN I SUDDENLY FORGOT!

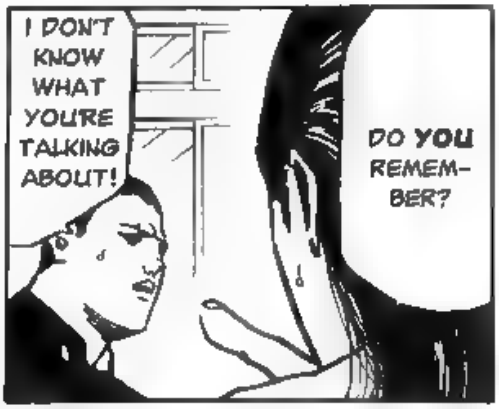
UH...

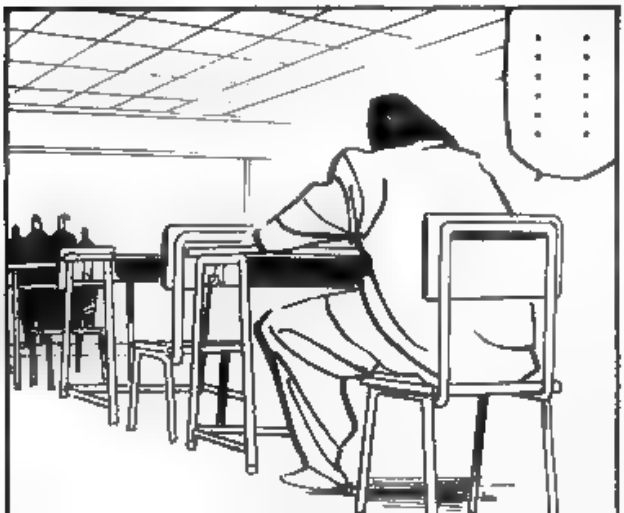
YEAH, FINE.
ALL OF YOU JUST SHUT UP AND GIVE ME A SECOND. LET ME THINK!

NNNGH, DAMN! NOW I'M FEELING TOO MUCH PRESSURE!


. . . . . .

FINE.
YOU'RE ALL DISTRACTING ME SO MUCH THAT I CAN'T CONCENTRATE! I'LL JUST CALL YOU WHEN I'VE REMEMBERED.


I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT!
DO **YOU** REMEMBER?

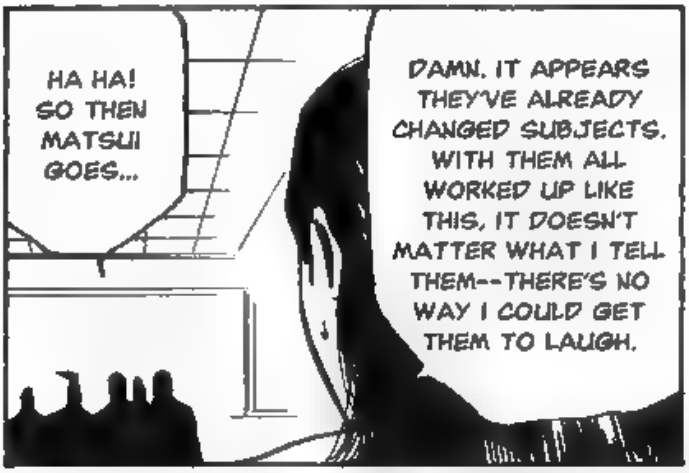

. . . . . .

NOW THEN, TIME TO CALM DOWN AND THINK ABOUT THIS...

I REMEMBER!
I WANTED TO BUY SOME CONDITIONER, BUT ALL THEY HAD WAS SHAMPOO WITH CONDITIONER.
100 YEN
100 YEN
IT WAS LAST WEEK. I WAS AT A DISCOUNT SHOP...
AND WASTED NO TIME IN CALLING OUT TO HIM.
EXCUSE ME!
FINALLY, I SPOTTED WHAT APPEARED TO BE A CLERK.
AH.
I DECIDED TO ASK A SHOP CLERK ABOUT IT, BUT I COULDN'T FIND ONE ANYWHERE.
OH, MY APOLOGIES.
SORRY, I DON'T WORK HERE.

THAT'S NOT INTERESTING AT ALL!
I MUST NOT HAVE BEEN THINKING STRAIGHT... WHAT A TERRIBLE BLUNDER!
WHAT MADE ME THINK THERE WAS ANYTHING REMOTELY INTERESTING ABOUT THAT?
AH! G-GIVE ME A MOMENT!
HOKUTO-KUN, HAVE YOU REMEMBERED YET?
STILL, I'M SURE THOSE BUFFOONS HAVE FORGOTTEN ALL ABOUT IT BY NOW.

IN SITUATIONS SUCH AS THESE, SPEED IS OF THE ESSENCE--ONE SHOULD STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS STILL HOT! BY MAKING EVERYONE WAIT THIS LONG, I'VE ALREADY LOST THEM! WAIT A MOMENT. PERHAPS THE REASON I MOMENTARILY FORGOT IS THAT THIS STORY WASN'T SO INTERESTING TO BEGIN WITH...
THESE SORTS OF STORIES SHOULD BE TOLD AS SOON AS THEY'RE REMEMBERED. YOU CAN'T LET TOO MUCH TIME ELAPSE BEFORE SHARING THEM. AARGH, WHAT HAVE I DONE?!


HA HA! SO THEN MATSUI GOES...
DAMN. IT APPEARS THEY'VE ALREADY CHANGED SUBJECTS. WITH THEM ALL WORKED UP LIKE THIS, IT DOESN'T MATTER WHAT I TELL THEM--THERE'S NO WAY I COULD GET THEM TO LAUGH.

NO! I'M SURE THAT IF TOLD AS IS, IT SHOULD STILL BE SUFFICIENT TO AMUSE.

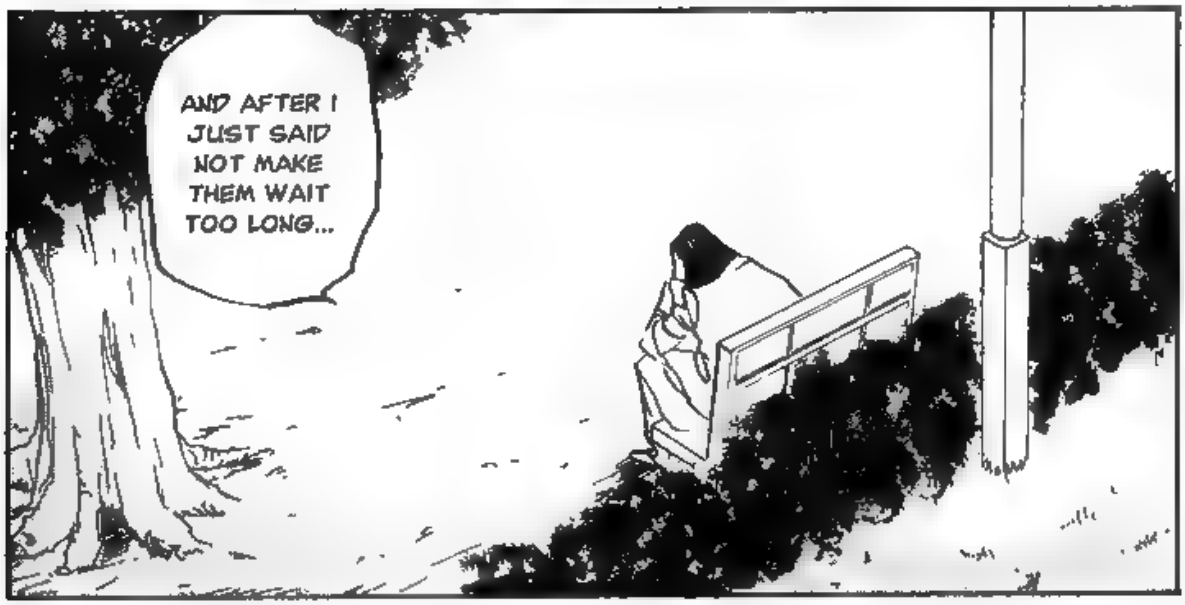
HUH?
DO YOU MIND?

. . . . . .

WHAT IS IT?
WHOA! YOU REMEMBERED?

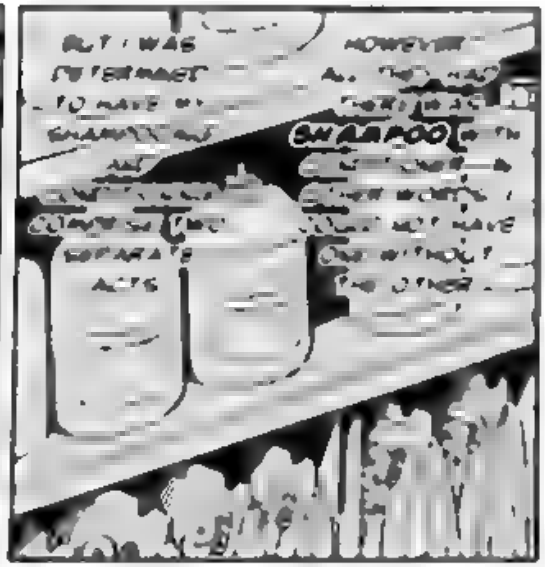
I HAVE RECALLED MY STORY FROM BEFORE.

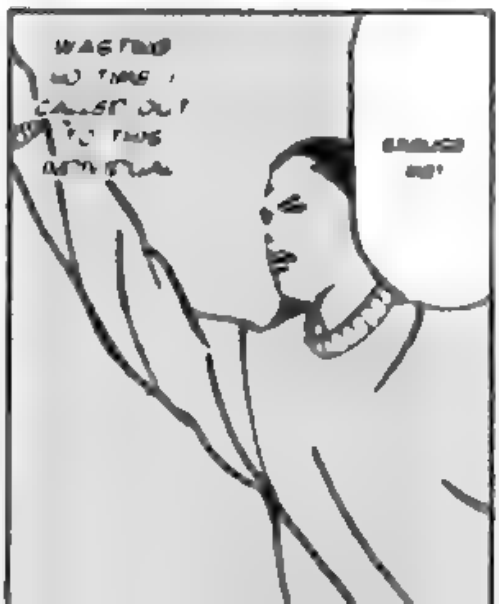
WHAAT?!
I WILL PRESENT IT TOMORROW.


AND AFTER I JUST SAID NOT MAKE THEM WAIT TOO LONG...

TOO BAD.

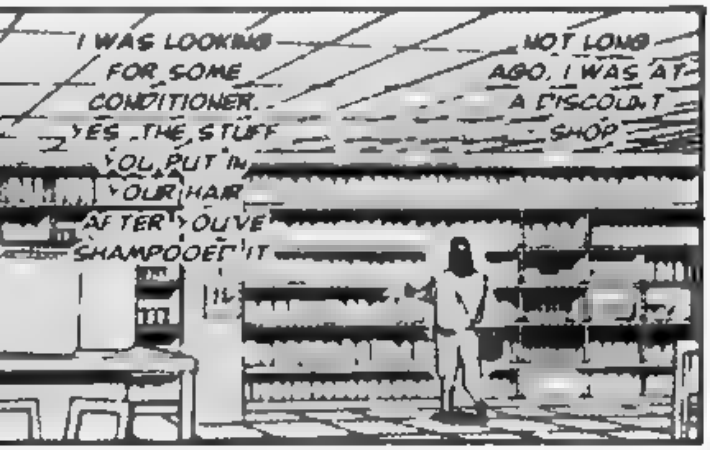
CHAPTER 168 LET IT BLEND





NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT, THAT STORY IS COMPLETELY UNINTERESTING!
I HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO TELL THIS STORY TO THE OTHERS TOMORROW... BUT I CAN'T VERY WELL TELL IT AS IS. I WOULD LOSE ALL CREDIBILITY!
STILL, IT'S TOO LATE TO START HAVING ANY REGRETS.
WHAT MADE ME THINK IT WAS AMUSING?!
YES, EVEN IF IT BECOMES AN OUTRIGHT LIE, WHAT'S MOST IMPORTANT IS THAT IT'S INTERESTING AND CAN ENTERTAIN OTHERS. INDEED, SUCH THINKING IS A STAPLE OF TELEVISION PROGRAMMING.
I HAVE TO FIND SOME WAY TO EMBELLISH THIS STORY TO MAKE IT MORE INTERESTING, BY TOMORROW.

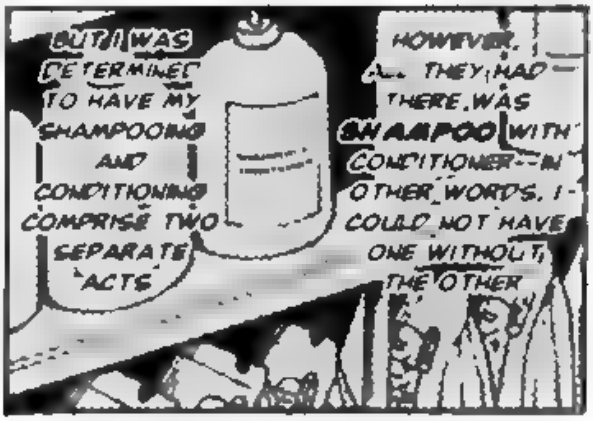
HMM, BUT HOW TO EMBELLISH? THE MAIN PROBLEM WITH THIS STORY IS THAT IT'S FAR TOO NORMAL. THERE'S NOTHING SURPRISING, NO SUDDEN TWISTS...


I WAS LOOKING FOR SOME CONDITIONER. YES, THE STUFF YOU PUT IN YOUR HAIR AFTER YOU'VE SHAMPOOED IT
NOT LONG AGO, I WAS AT A DISCOUNT SHOP

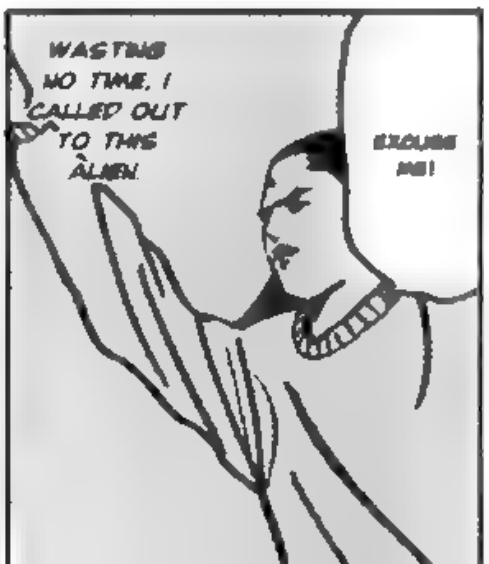
WHAT IF I CHANGED THE PERSON APPEARING IN THIS STORY INTO AN ALIEN?

UM...
FINALLY, I SPOTTED AN ALIEN THAT LOOKED SOMEWHAT LIKE A CLERK.

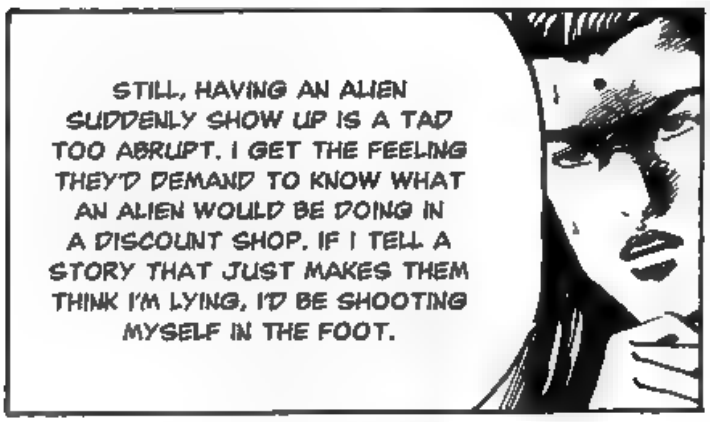
I DECIDED TO ASK A SHOP CLERK ABOUT THIS, BUT I COULDN'T FIND ONE ANYWHERE

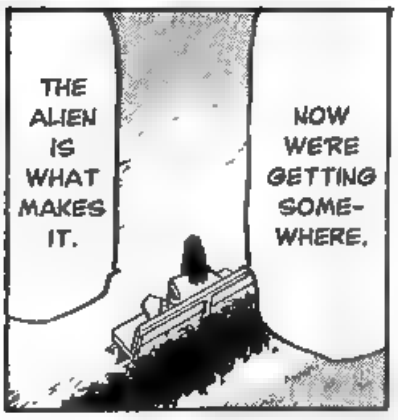

BUT I WAS DETERMINED TO HAVE MY SHAMPOOING AND CONDITIONING COMPRISE TWO SEPARATE ACTS
HOWEVER, THEY HAD THERE WAS SHAMPOO WITH CONDITIONER—IN OTHER WORDS, I COULD NOT HAVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER

OH, MY
SORRY I DON'T WORK HERE

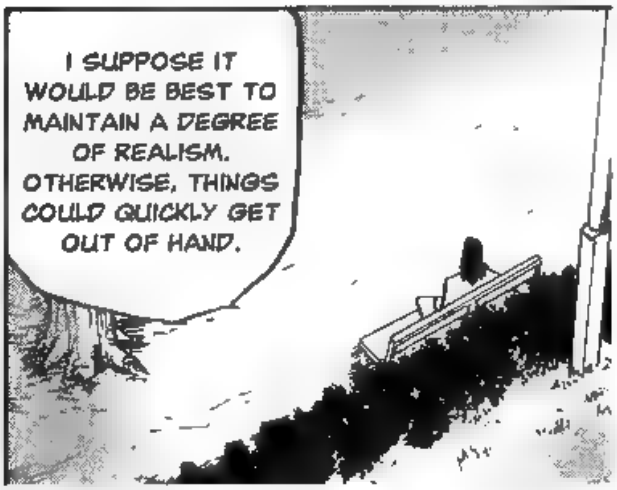

WASTING NO TIME, I CALLED OUT TO THIS ALIEN.
EXCUSE ME!

YES, THAT'S QUITE NICE.

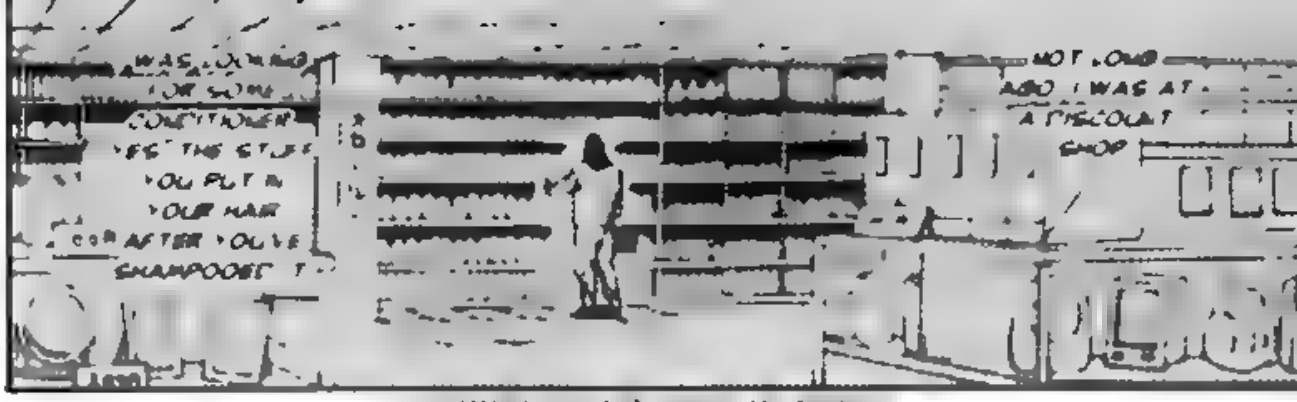

STILL, HAVING AN ALIEN SUDDENLY SHOW UP IS A TAD TOO ABRUPT. I GET THE FEELING THEY'D DEMAND TO KNOW WHAT AN ALIEN WOULD BE DOING IN A DISCOUNT SHOP. IF I TELL A STORY THAT JUST MAKES THEM THINK I'M LYING, I'D BE SHOOTING MYSELF IN THE FOOT.

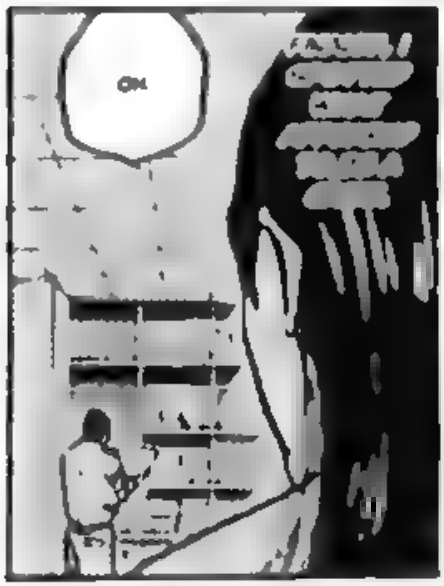

THE ALIEN IS WHAT MAKES IT.
NOW WE'RE GETTING SOME-WHERE.

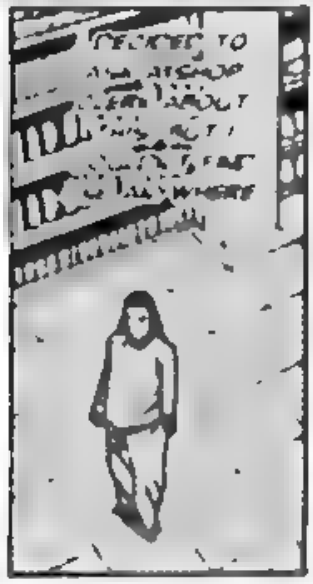
FOR STARTERS, I SHOULD HAVE THE HUMAN REMAIN A HUMAN. BUT I COULD TRY A DIFFERENT LOCATION-- SAY, A RAMEN SHOP RATHER THAN A DISCOUNT STORE.

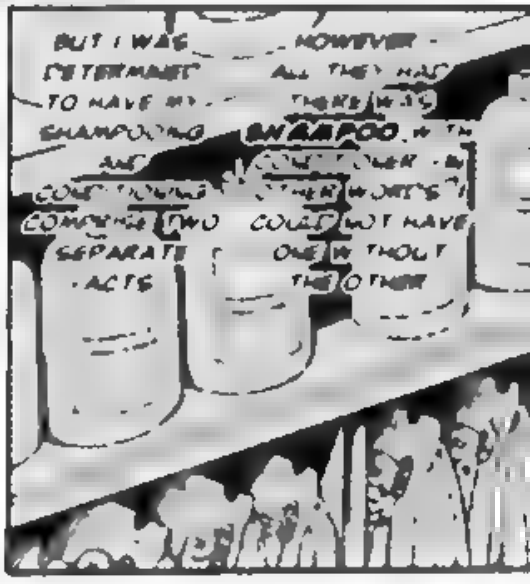

I SUPPOSE IT WOULD BE BEST TO MAINTAIN A DEGREE OF REALISM. OTHERWISE, THINGS COULD QUICKLY GET OUT OF HAND.

THERE WAS A PERSON BEHIND THE COUNTER WHO FOR ALL INTENTS AND PURPOSES LOOKED LIKE AN EMPLOYEE.
THE OTHER DAY, I WENT TO A RAMEN SHOP.
RAMEN
OH. MY APOLOGIES.
SORRY, I DON'T WORK HERE.
EXCUSE ME! ONE SHIO RAMEN, PLEASE.
THEREFORE, I NATURALLY CALLED OUT TO THAT PERSON TO PLACE MY ORDER.
WHAT IF THEY DEMAND TO KNOW WHAT SOMEONE WHO DOESN'T WORK THERE IS DOING BEHIND THE COUNTER? THIS STORY IS BECOMING MORE **BIZARRE** THAN INTERESTING.
NOW IT DOESN'T EVEN MAKE SENSE ANYMORE!
I'LL KEEP THE SETTING AS THE DISCOUNT SHOP BUT ADD SOMETHING OF A TWIST TO THE LATTER HALF OF THE STORY.
IT CAN'T BE HELPED! I'LL JUST HAVE TO GO A MORE ORTHODOX ROUTE.


COME TO HER
FOR THE STUFF
YOU PUT IN
YOUR HAIR
AFTER YOU'VE
SHAMPOOED
NOT LONG
AGO I WAS AT
A PETTICOAT
SHOP


OH


DECIDED TO

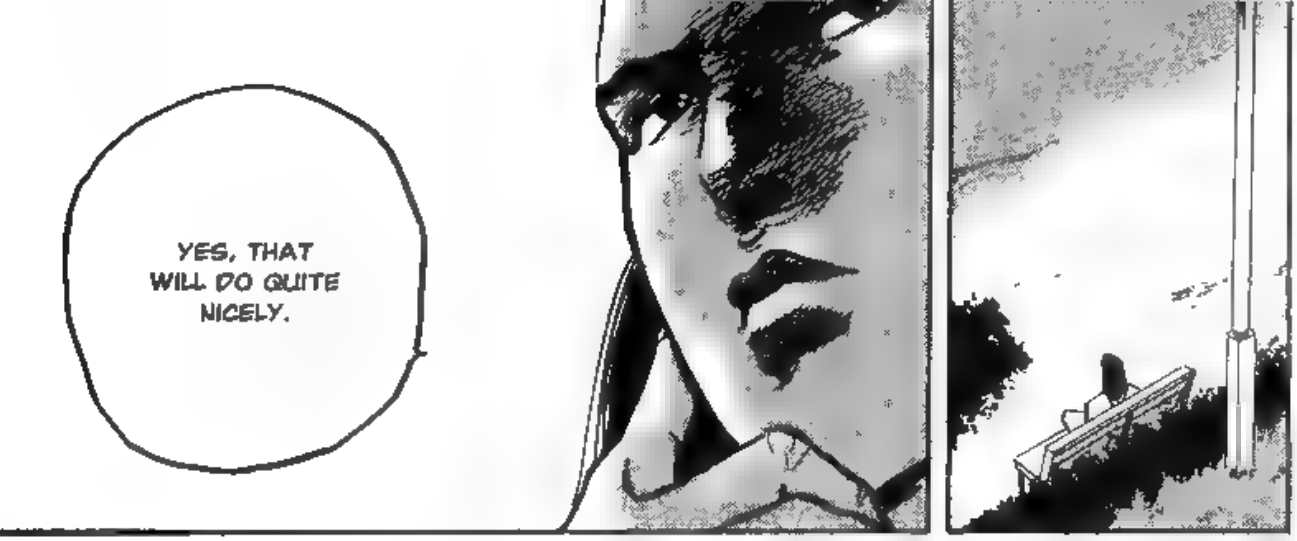

BUT I WAS
DETERMINED
TO HAVE MY
SHAMPOOING
AND
HOWEVER
ALL THEY HAD
THERE WAS
SHAMPOO
COMBINING TWO
SEPARATE
ACTS
COULD NOT HAVE
ONE WITHOUT
THE OTHER

THERE'S
SOMETHING
I'D LIKE TO
ASK YOU
YES?

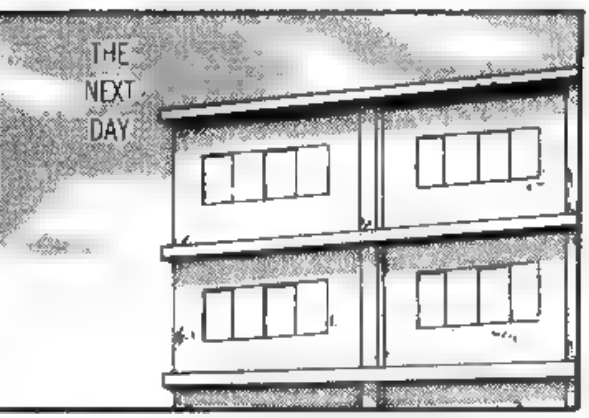
WASTING
NO TIME I
CALLED OUT
TO THE
ATTENDANT
UH
AC

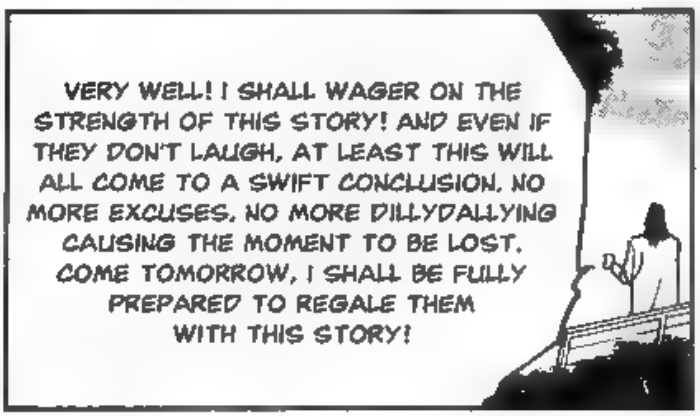
OH SORRY
ABOUT
THAT
I WORK
HERE
SIR

I'M TRYING TO
FIND SOMEONE
WHO WORKS HERE
HAVE YOU SEEN
ANYONE?


YES, THAT WILL DO QUITE NICELY.

THESE SORTS OF STORIES ARE DEFINED BY THE MUNDANITY OF THEIR HUMOR, THE EASE WITH WHICH THEY CAN BE TOLD. THEY DO NOT REQUIRE ADDITIONAL ELEMENTS TO "SPICE THEM UP."
SIMPLE IS BEST, AS THEY SAY. IT WAS A MISTAKE TO THINK OF INCLUDING ALIENS AND OTHER SUCH FANCIFUL ELEMENTS.

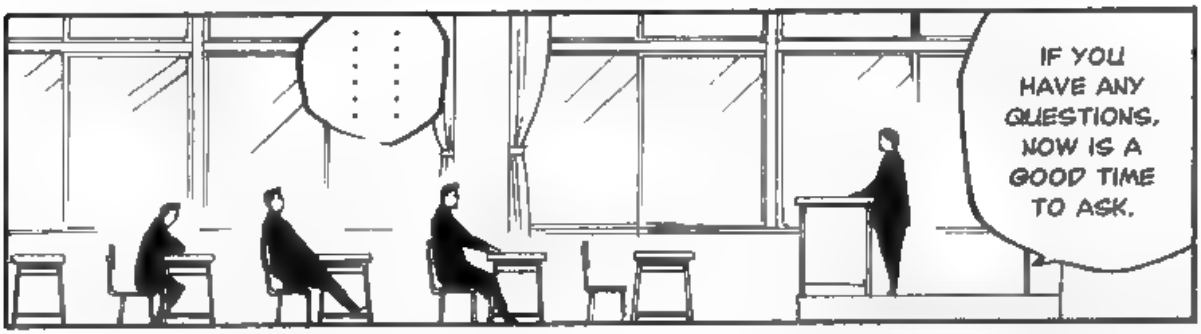

THE NEXT DAY


VERY WELL! I SHALL WAGER ON THE STRENGTH OF THIS STORY! AND EVEN IF THEY DON'T LAUGH, AT LEAST THIS WILL ALL COME TO A SWIFT CONCLUSION. NO MORE EXCUSES, NO MORE DILLYDALLYING CAUSING THE MOMENT TO BE LOST. COME TOMORROW, I SHALL BE FULLY PREPARED TO REGALE THEM WITH THIS STORY!

VERY WELL, I AM NOW READY TO PRESENT THE STORY I MENTIONED TO YOU YESTERDAY.
AH! GOOD MORN-ING.
GOOD MORN-ING.

THE WAY HE WORRIED ABOUT ALL THIS IS WHAT A COMEDY WRITER HAS TO GO THROUGH.

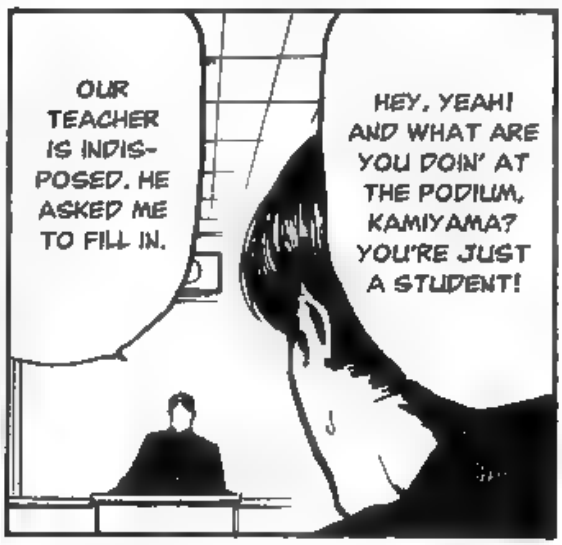
TODAY WE WILL BE PERFORMING SOME EVACUATION DRILLS!
I WILL BE GUIDING YOU THROUGH THE NECESSARY PROCEDURES, SO PLEASE FOLLOW THESE INSTRUCTIONS CAREFULLY.
CHAPTER 169: GIMME SHELTER


IF YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, NOW IS A GOOD TIME TO ASK.

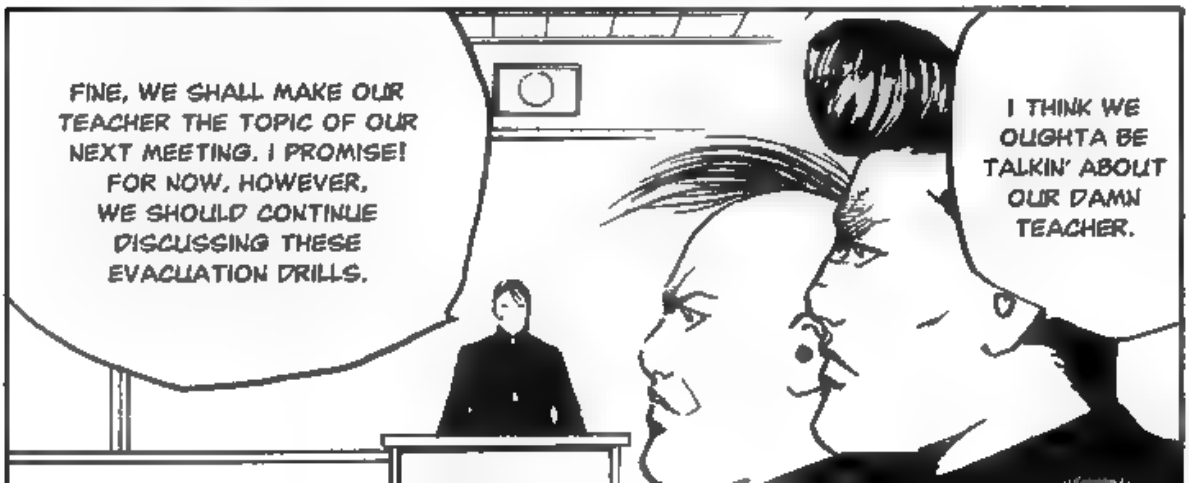
STILL, I'VE GOT... NOT A QUESTION, BUT MORE LIKE A DOUBT.
GOOD. THANK YOU FOR YOUR UNDER-STANDING.
NAH, I DON'T HAVE ANY QUESTIONS.

ISN'T IT USUALLY THE [redacted] WHO TELLS US THIS KIND OF STUFF?
AND WHAT IS THAT?

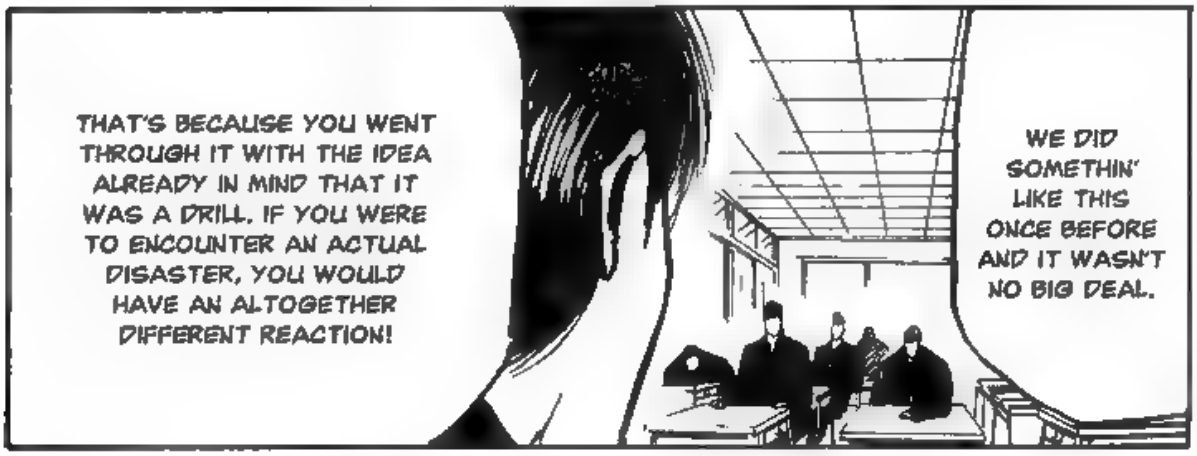
DUDE, WHERE IS OUR FRIGGIN TEACHER? I HAVEN'T SEEN HIM IN **MONTHS**! DO WE EVEN HAVE TEACHERS HERE ANYMORE?!

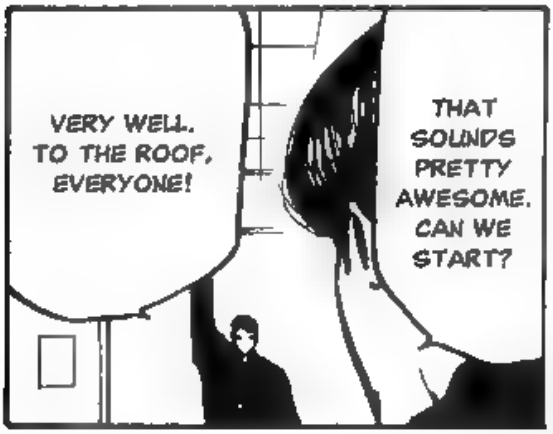

OUR TEACHER IS INDIS-POSED. HE ASKED ME TO FILL IN.
HEY, YEAH! AND WHAT ARE YOU DOIN' AT THE PODIUM, KAMIYAMA? YOU'RE JUST A STUDENT!

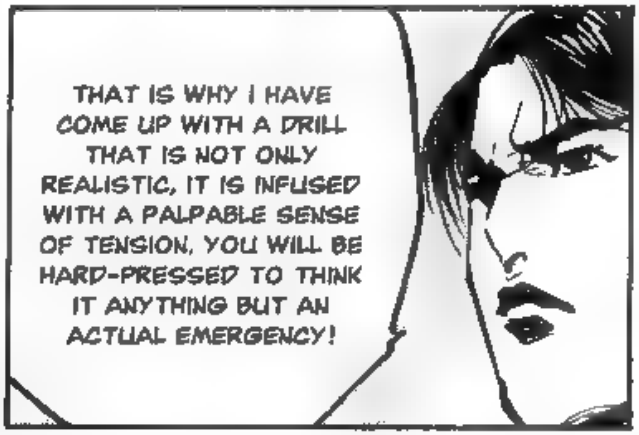
THERE ARE TEACHERS HERE! I SAW OURS JUST A LITTLE WHILE AGO! IN ANY EVENT, PLEASE DON'T CHANGE THE SUBJECT-- WE WERE TALKING ABOUT OUR EVACUATION DRILLS.
NOT HAVIN' ANY TEACHERS HAS GOTTA BE MORE DANGEROUS THAN A FIRE OR SOME-THIN'.
I DON'T CARE HOW "BAD" A SCHOOL IS, IT STILL NEEDS TO HAVE TEACHERS. THIS MIGHT NOT BE THE BEST TIME TO BE DOING EVACUATION DRILLS.

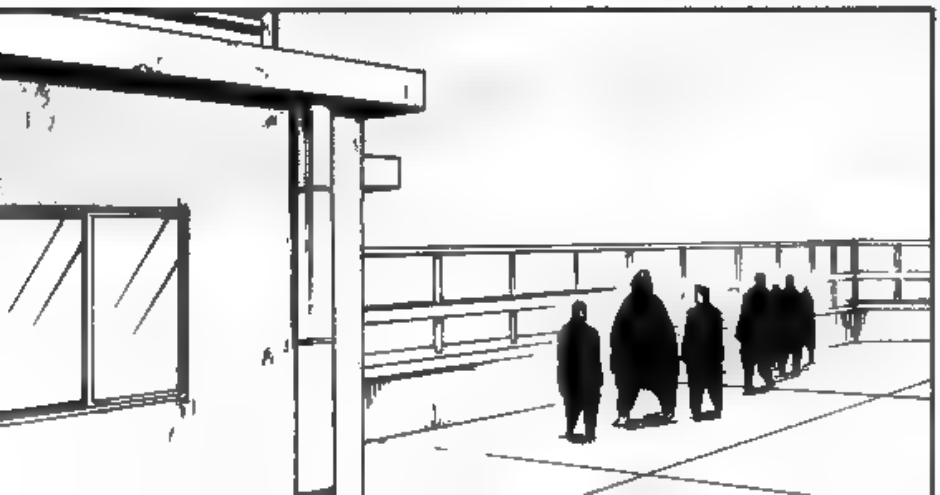

FINE, WE SHALL MAKE OUR TEACHER THE TOPIC OF OUR NEXT MEETING. I PROMISE! FOR NOW, HOWEVER, WE SHOULD CONTINUE DISCUSSING THESE EVACUATION DRILLS.
I THINK WE OUGHTA BE TALKIN' ABOUT OUR DAMN TEACHER.

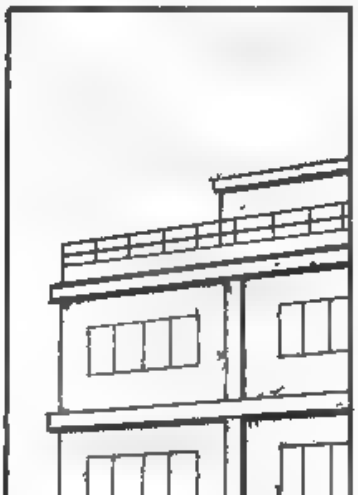
HEY, THAT'S A GOOD POINT. YOU SAY SOME MEANINGFUL SHIT ONCE IN A WHILE.
YEAH, BUT STILL... ISN'T "EVACUATION DRILL" JUST A FANCY TERM FOR RUNNING AWAY? DO WE REALLY NEED TO PRACTICE SOMETHIN' LIKE THAT?


THAT'S BECAUSE YOU WENT THROUGH IT WITH THE IDEA ALREADY IN MIND THAT IT WAS A DRILL. IF YOU WERE TO ENCOUNTER AN ACTUAL DISASTER, YOU WOULD HAVE AN ALTOGETHER DIFFERENT REACTION!
WE DID SOMETHIN' LIKE THIS ONCE BEFORE AND IT WASN'T NO BIG DEAL.

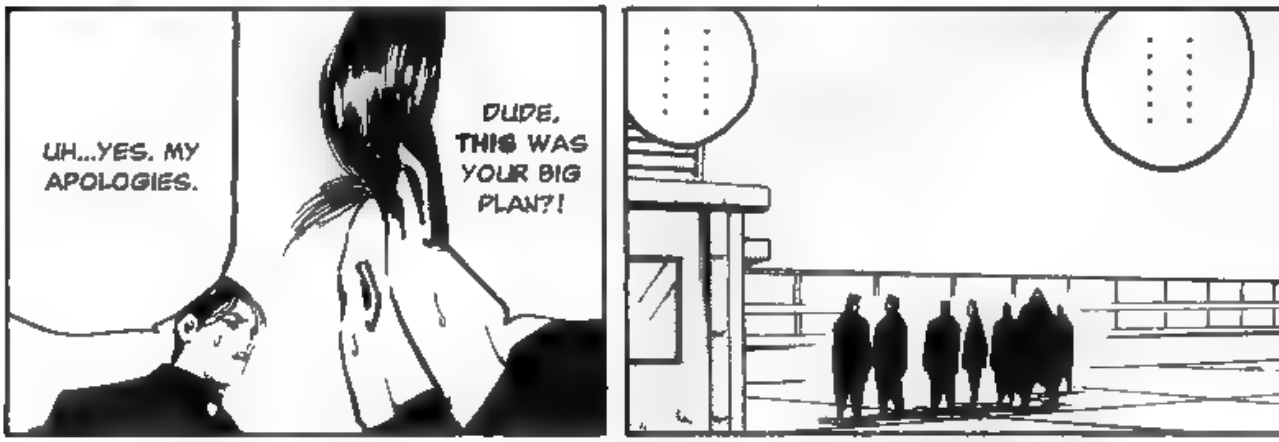

VERY WELL. TO THE ROOF, EVERYONE!
THAT SOUNDS PRETTY AWESOME. CAN WE START?

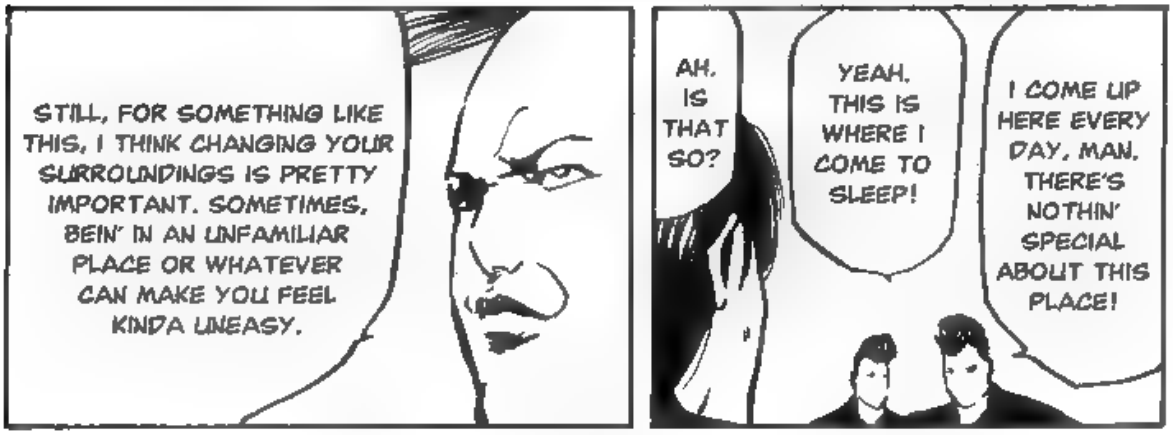

THAT IS WHY I HAVE COME UP WITH A DRILL THAT IS NOT ONLY REALISTIC, IT IS INFUSED WITH A PALPABLE SENSE OF TENSION. YOU WILL BE HARD-PRESSED TO THINK IT ANYTHING BUT AN ACTUAL EMERGENCY!



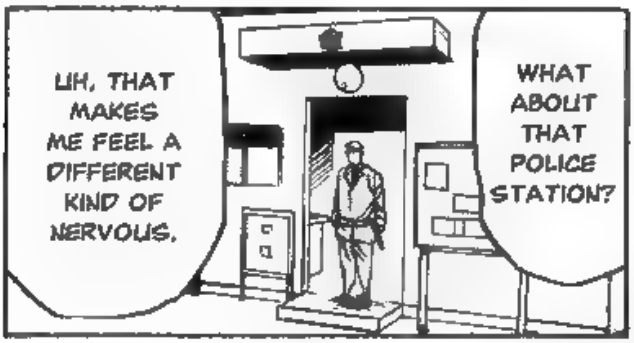


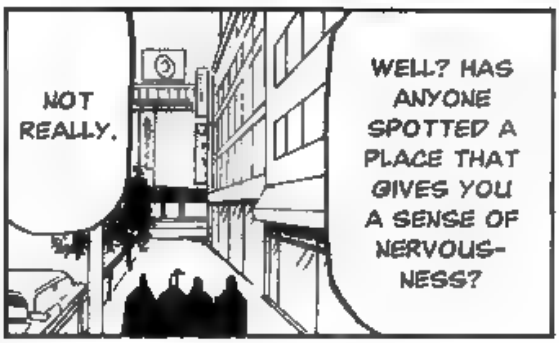
IN COMING HERE TO THE ROOF, AREN'T YOU FILLED WITH A SENSE OF NERVOUS TENSION, AS IN, "AH! THERE WAS SOME SORT OF EMERGENCY SO WE HAD TO ESCAPE UP TO THE ROOF"?
WELL, BASICALLY...
OK, SO WE'RE ON THE ROOF. WHAT'S THIS SUPPOSED TO PROVE?


UH...YES. MY APOLOGIES.
DUDE, THIS WAS YOUR BIG PLAN?!
. . . . . .
. . . . . .


STILL, FOR SOMETHING LIKE THIS, I THINK CHANGING YOUR SURROUNDINGS IS PRETTY IMPORTANT. SOMETIMES, BEIN' IN AN UNFAMILIAR PLACE OR WHATEVER CAN MAKE YOU FEEL KINDA UNEASY.
AH. IS THAT SO?
YEAH. THIS IS WHERE I COME TO SLEEP!
I COME UP HERE EVERY DAY, MAN. THERE'S NOTHIN' SPECIAL ABOUT THIS PLACE!

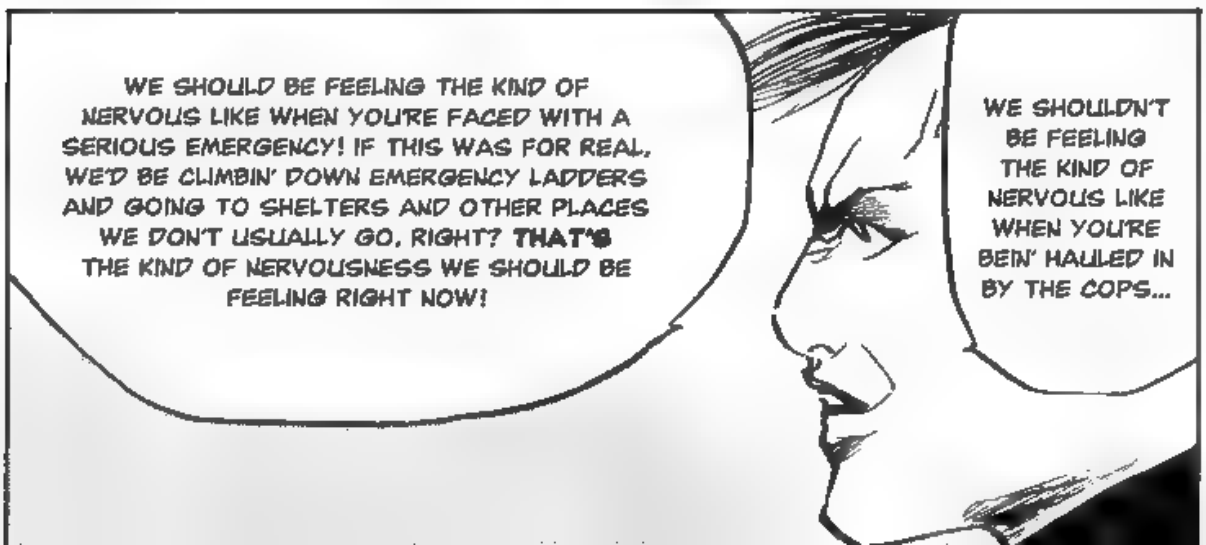
HEY, GOOD IDEA.
WHAT DO YOU SAY WE LEAVE THE SCHOOL GROUNDS?
NAH, I GO THERE ALL THE TIME. TO, LIKE, SLEEP AND STUFF.
LIKE WHERE? THE GYM STORE-ROOM?


UH, THAT MAKES ME FEEL A DIFFERENT KIND OF NERVOUS.
WHAT ABOUT THAT POLICE STATION?

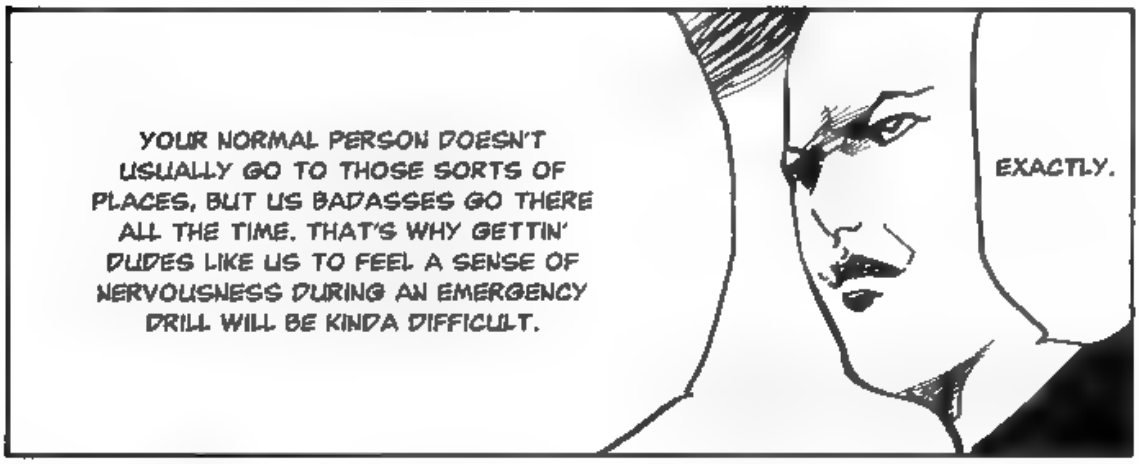

NOT REALLY.
WELL? HAS ANYONE SPOTTED A PLACE THAT GIVES YOU A SENSE OF NERVOUS-NESS?

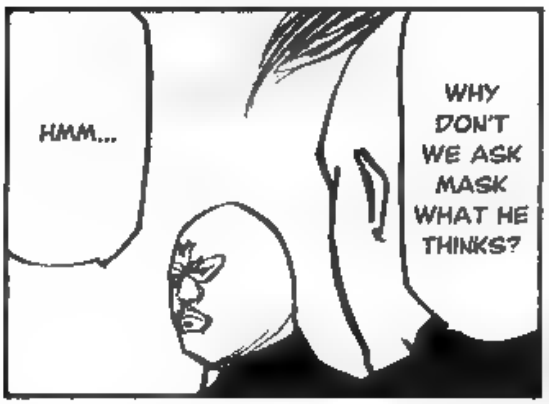
OH, THAT'S RIGHT! SORRY, I FORGOT.
WE'RE SUPPOSED TO BE DOING EVACU-ATION DRILLS.

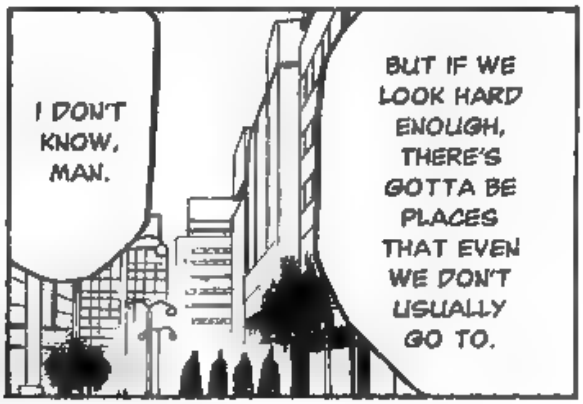
JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE, I'M GONNA COME OUT AND SAY THIS...


WE SHOULD BE FEELING THE KIND OF NERVOUS LIKE WHEN YOU'RE FACED WITH A SERIOUS EMERGENCY! IF THIS WAS FOR REAL, WE'D BE CLIMBIN' DOWN EMERGENCY LADDERS AND GOING TO SHELTERS AND OTHER PLACES WE DON'T USUALLY GO, RIGHT? THAT'S THE KIND OF NERVOUSNESS WE SHOULD BE FEELING RIGHT NOW!
WE SHOULDN'T BE FEELING THE KIND OF NERVOUS LIKE WHEN YOU'RE BEIN' HAULED IN BY THE COPS...

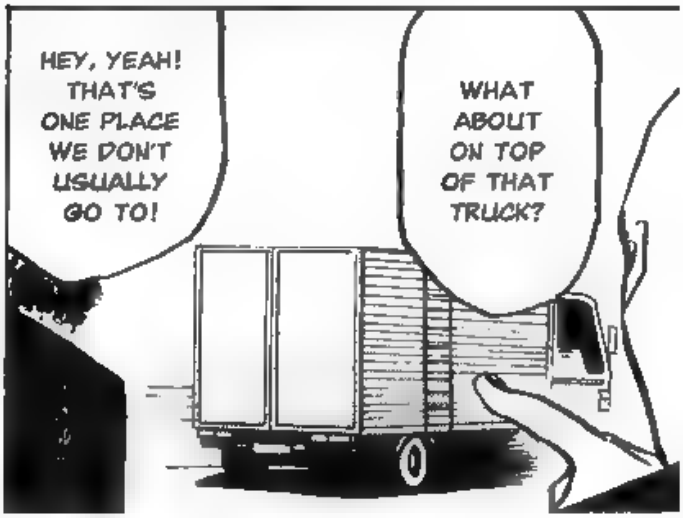
BUT DON'T WE ALREADY GO PLACES WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO? LIKE, WE SMOKE CIGARETTES BY THE EMERGENCY LADDER AND WE GO UP TO THE SCHOOL ROOF AND STUFF. WE'RE ALWAYS AT PLACES LIKE THAT EVEN WHEN IT'S NOT AN EMERGENCY.
'Course, I ain't never been to a shelter.
YEAH.
SO IF WE GO SOMEPLACE WE'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO BE, IT'LL MAKE US FEEL LIKE HOW WE'D FEEL IN AN EMERGENCY? THAT MAKES SENSE.


YOUR NORMAL PERSON DOESN'T USUALLY GO TO THOSE SORTS OF PLACES, BUT US BADASSES GO THERE ALL THE TIME. THAT'S WHY GETTIN' DUDES LIKE US TO FEEL A SENSE OF NERVOUSNESS DURING AN EMERGENCY DRILL WILL BE KINDA DIFFICULT.
EXACTLY.

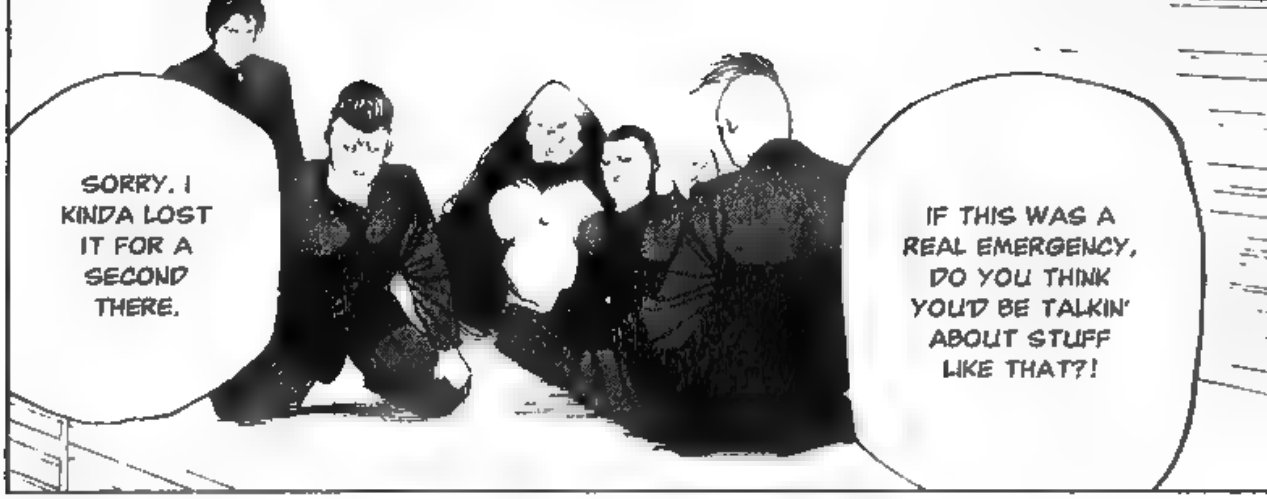

HMM...
WHY DON'T WE ASK MASK WHAT HE THINKS?

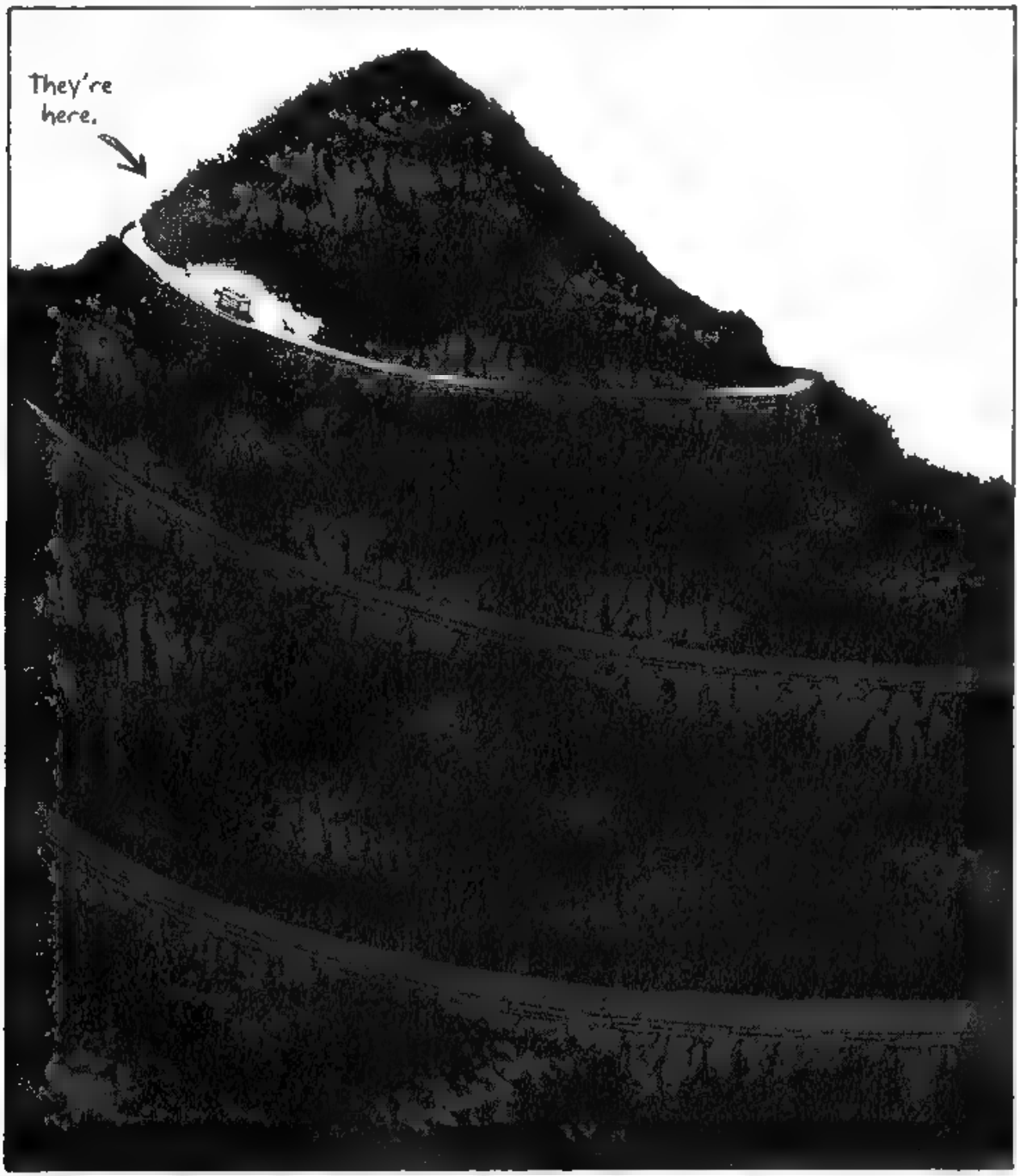

I DON'T KNOW, MAN.
BUT IF WE LOOK HARD ENOUGH, THERE'S GOTTA BE PLACES THAT EVEN WE DON'T USUALLY GO TO.

QUIT COMPLAIN-IN' AND START CLIMBIN'.
UH, ISN'T IT A PLACE WE'D **NEVER** GO TO?


HEY, YEAH! THAT'S ONE PLACE WE DON'T USUALLY GO TO!
WHAT ABOUT ON TOP OF THAT TRUCK?

VRMM
YEAH, THIS FEELS PRETTY GOOD.
WELL?
THIS IS EXACTLY THE KINDA NERVOUSNESS WE'RE AFTER!
GOOD.
CRAP! IT'S MOVING!
EXCELLENT. YOU CAN'T GET MORE NERVOUS THAN THIS!
WHERE DO YOU THINK THIS TRUCK IS GOIN? WHAT IF IT GOES TO HOKKAIDO OR KYUSHU OR SOMETHING? THIS COULD BE BAD!
VRMM
HEY!
REALLY?! DUDE, YOU COULD BE IN TROUBLE.
BUT I ALREADY TOLD MY MOM I'D BE HOME BY FIVE!





YUP, THIS IS WHERE IT ENDS. *NOT* TO BE CONTINUED.

THERE ARE FAR TOO MANY OF THEM BY NOW, BUT HERE IT IS— YOUR INTRODUCTION TO THE CHARACTERS!

TAKASHI KAMIYAMA

The protagonist of this manga. He may not appear that often these days, but he s the protagonist. No matter what anyone says, he s still the protagonist. The fact that he shows up so infrequently and seems to have become rather cold lately has been a cause of concern for my editor but *Cromartie* readers appear to be taking it all in stride, so whatever

SHINJIRO HAYASHIDA

In a manga brimming with strong, manly men, Hayashida stands out as a beacon of diocy Let s not mince words he s an utter twit A recent turn of events has caused me to think that maybe just maybe Hayashida s a hit with the ladies My editor and I have been thinking it might be fun for his family to make an appearance

AKIRA MAEDA

A man with very little presence indeed even if what he has to say is right on the money His forehead doesn t have much presence either Maeda s role as the man with the snappy comeback seems to slowly be coming to an end He s a pretty useful character so he tends to show up a lot, but it seems like after firing off a quip or two his work s pretty much done. That's kinda sad

FREDDIE

By now, Freddie s pretty much faded out of the spotlight I like the way you'll see him sort of puttering away in the background. Visually Freddie still packs something of a punch, doesn't he? (The anime seems to have aged him a bit, though) When manga readers start to accept even characters like this as being a perfectly normal part of the cast you have to wonder if there's something wrong with them

SHINICHI MECHAZAWA

Does Mechazawa show up this time around? I forget Anyway, that hot blooded manliness he once had seems to have disappeared, leaving us with little more than a piece of furniture Lately, he's become a mainstay in a certain manga magazine aimed toward a younger audience Contrary to our initial expectations he s become a rather popular character, causing us on more than one occasion to think, "Dammit, you can't do that!"

THERE ARE FAR TOO MANY OF THEM BY NOW, BUT HERE IT IS— YOUR INTRODUCTION TO THE CHARACTERS!

TAKESHI HOKUTO

A rich and powerful would-be boy emperor, Hokuto has completely forgotten his original aim of putting all of Japan's high schools under his rule. He also seems to have forgotten that internal discord has divided the Hokuto Corps he once controlled, and that even now the two sides are locked in battle (or rather, yours truly had forgotten). He now seems perfectly content simply to attend school at Cromartie, where, by comparison with the rest of the student body, he looks like a first-rate student.

HOKUTO'S HENCHMAN

Hokuto's henchman is, in a word, somber. He's the king of somber. He and Hokuto appear to still be on good terms. His fierce loyalty at one point prompted the Four Great Ones to consider recruiting him into their fold, a turn of events at once unexpected and not entirely implausible. Pity it didn't work out--I was looking forward to seeing what kind of makeup he'd get.

MASKED TAKENOUCHI

A former hijacker, and if you think about it, he's about as far removed from a high-school student as you can get. In fact, sometimes he spouts something that sounds positively middle-aged. Masked Takenouchi has so thoroughly adapted to life at Cromartie that the others will call him by saying, "Hey, Mask." Which if you ask me is a little weird.

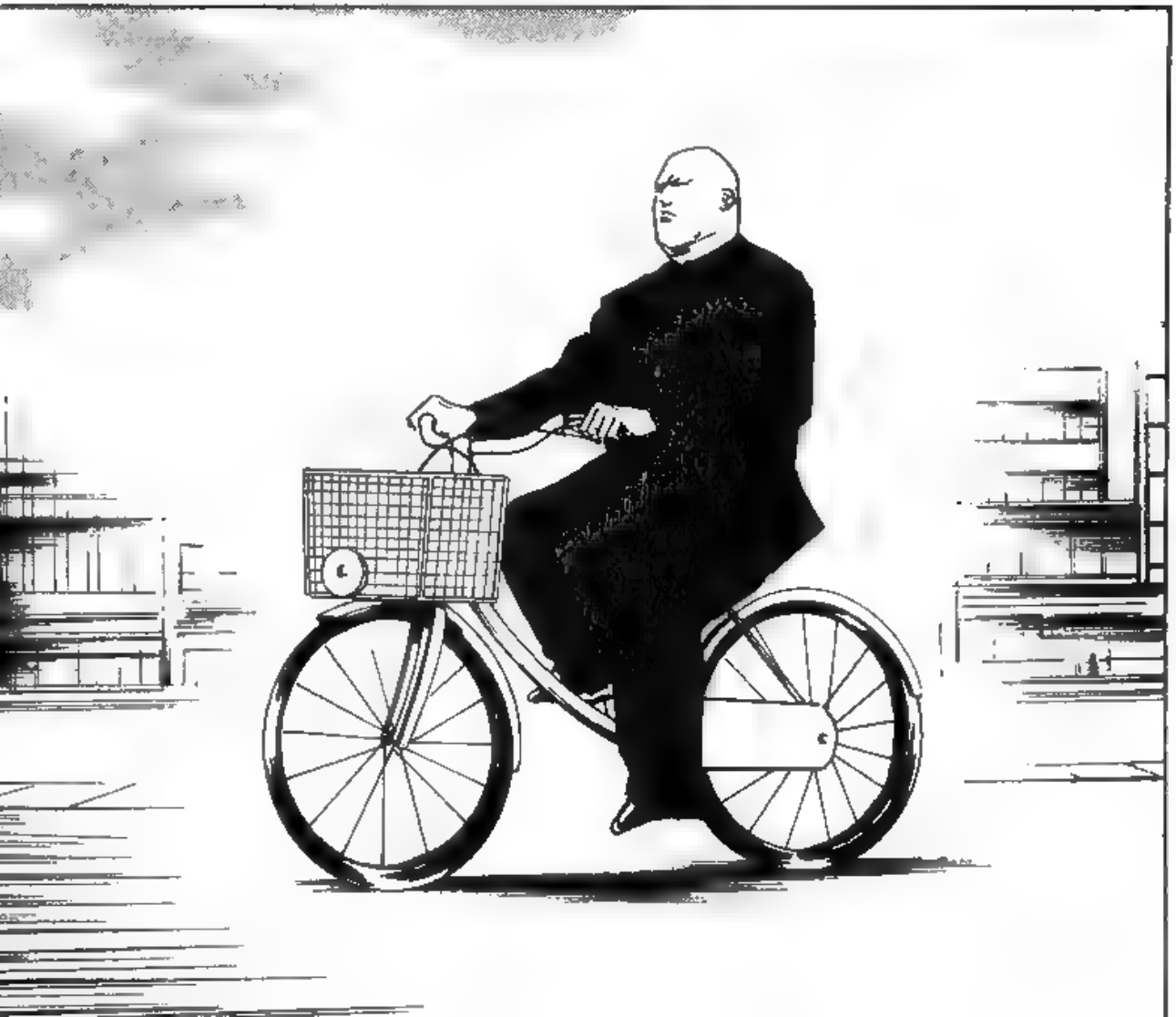
GORILLA

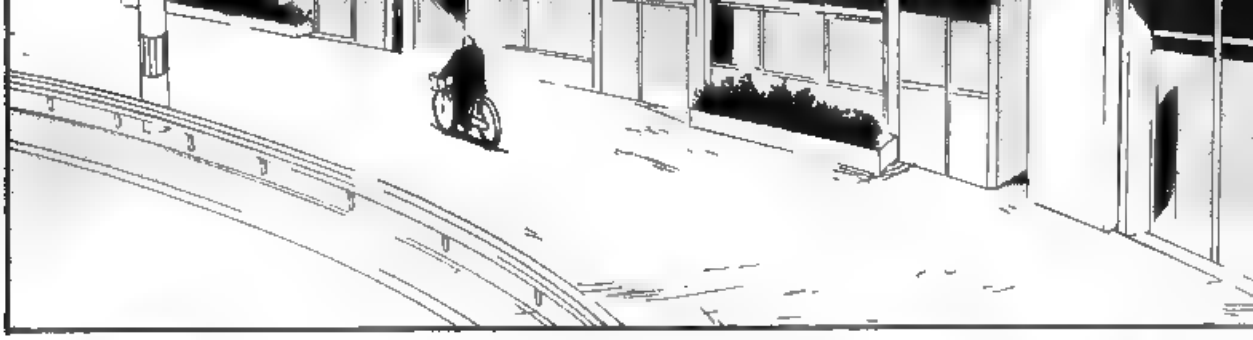
At one point there were a whole bunch of these things in the story, which was a royal pain. Of course, one of them is still hanging around. I think I've gotten much better at drawing him lately--to which my editor retorts, "What the hell good is that?!" Pardon us as we put our heads in our hands.

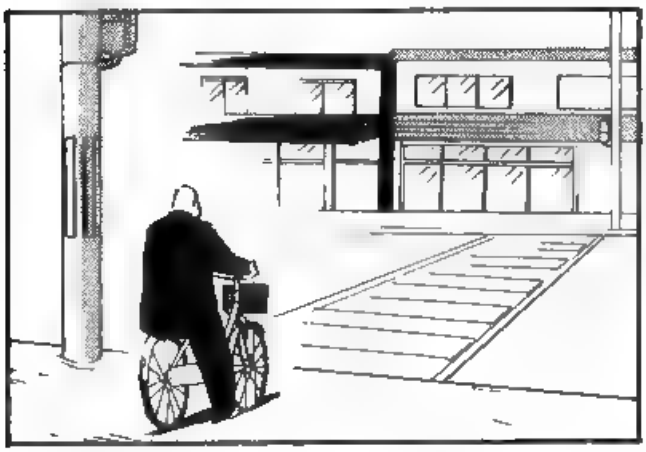
YUTAKA TAKENOUCHI

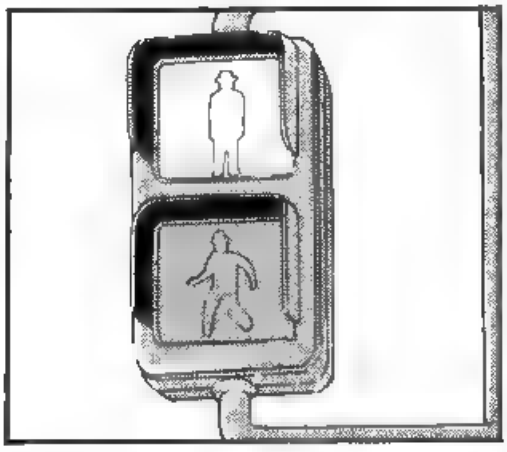
King of the 1st years at Cromartie. Takenouchi has a habit of not appearing for long stretches after he's ridden any sort of vehicle. So much so that in this character introduction, even the gorilla comes before him. Some people call him the "Vehicle Kingpin," which makes it sound as if he's quite good with vehicles, when in fact he's anything but.

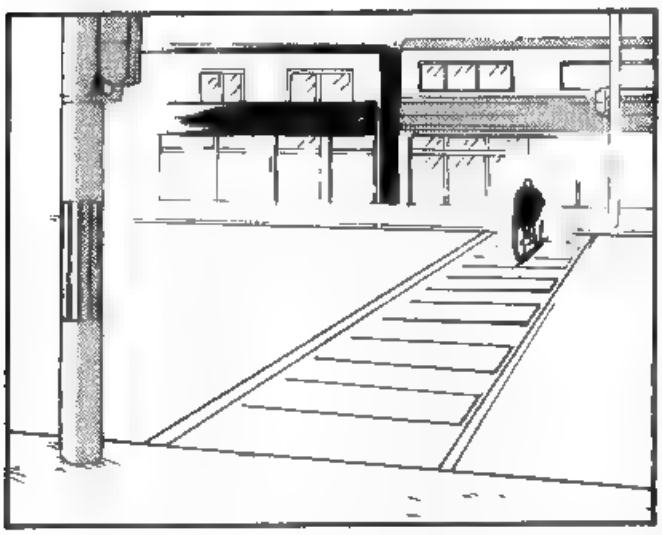
CHAPTER 170: **BICYCLE RACE**

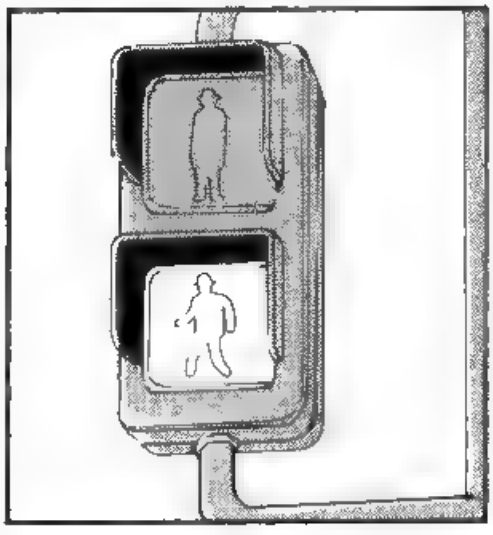


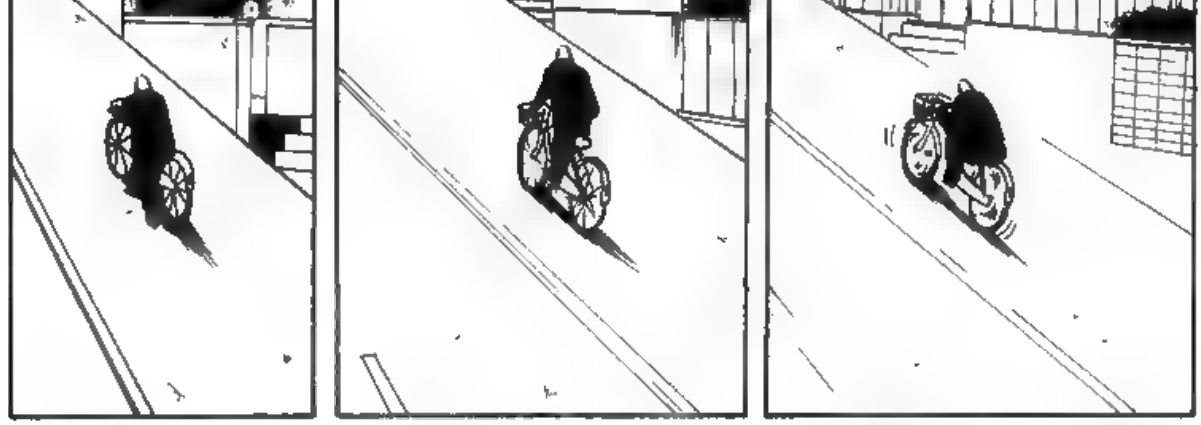


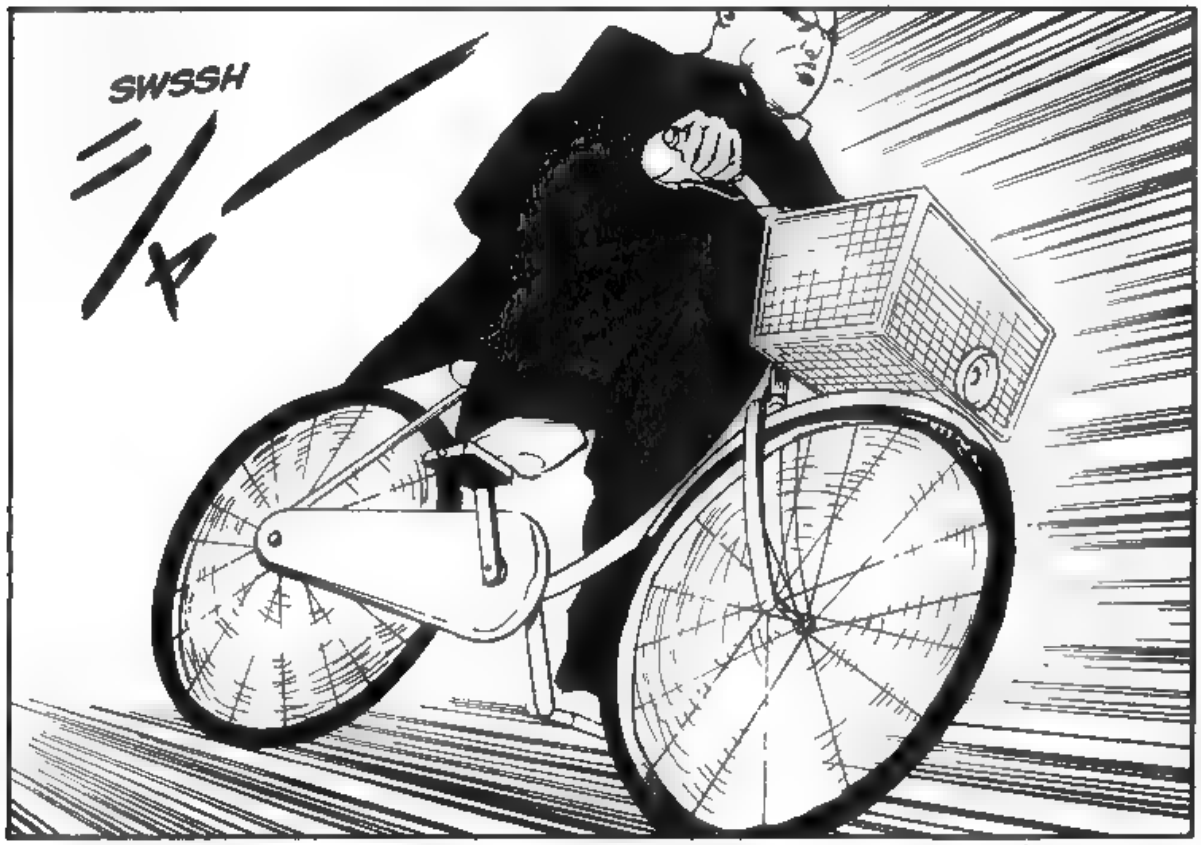


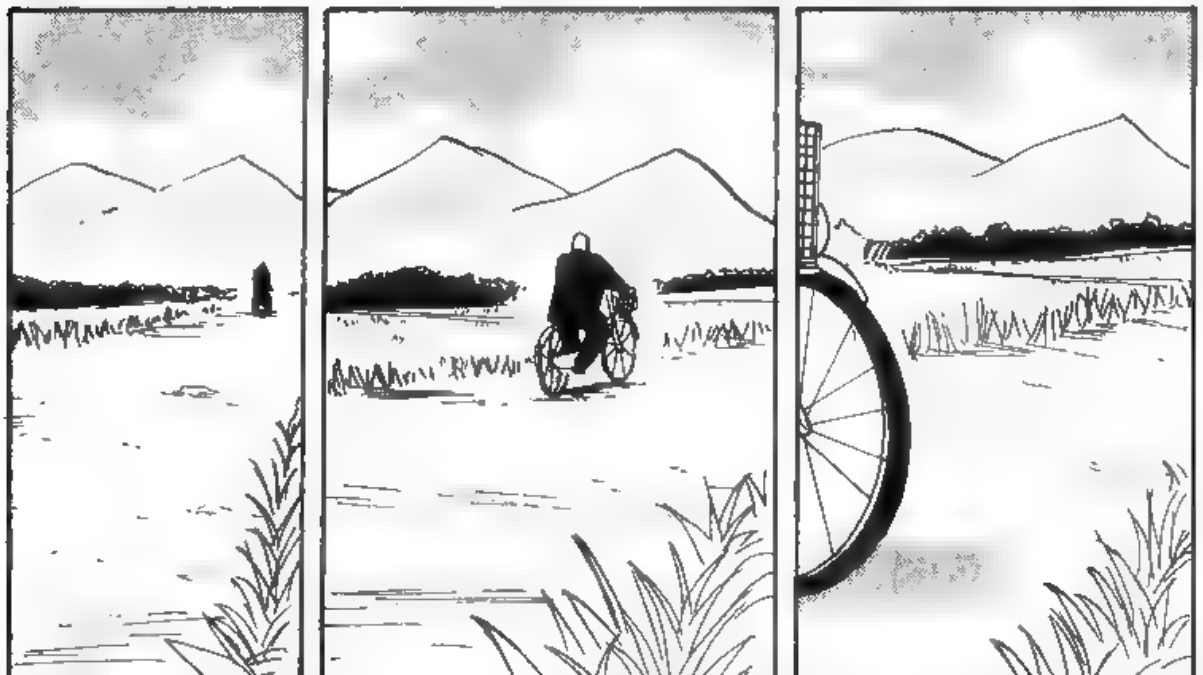






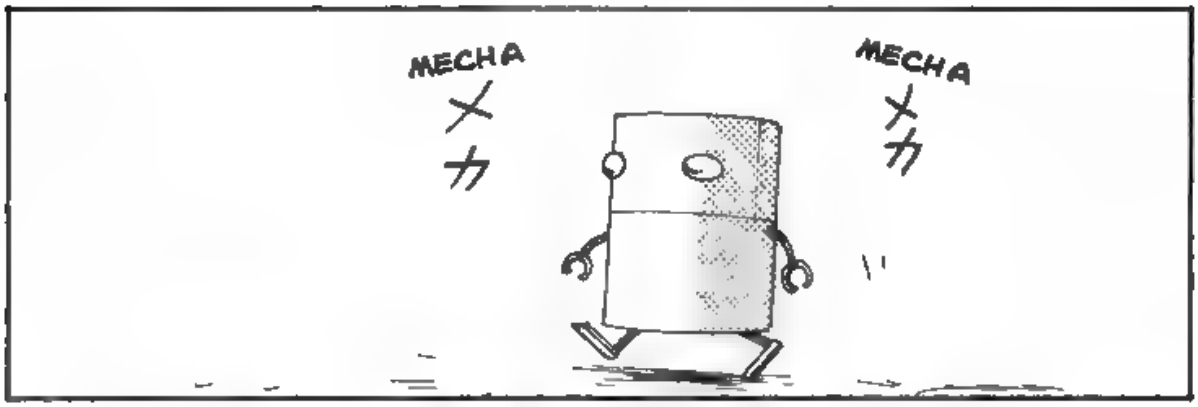


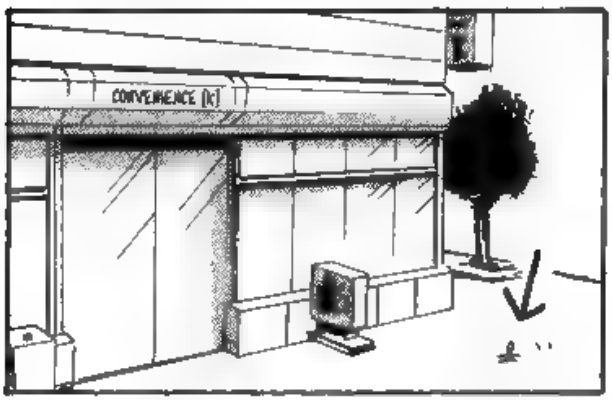

SWSSH

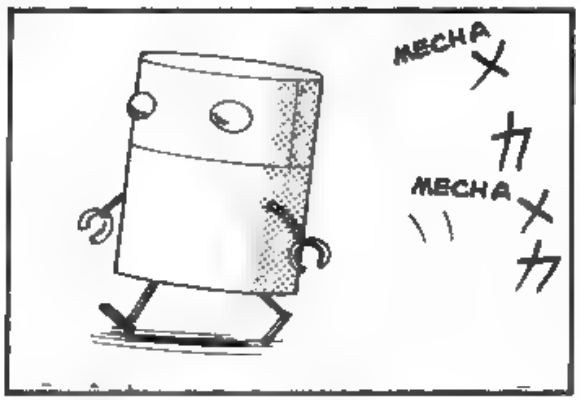


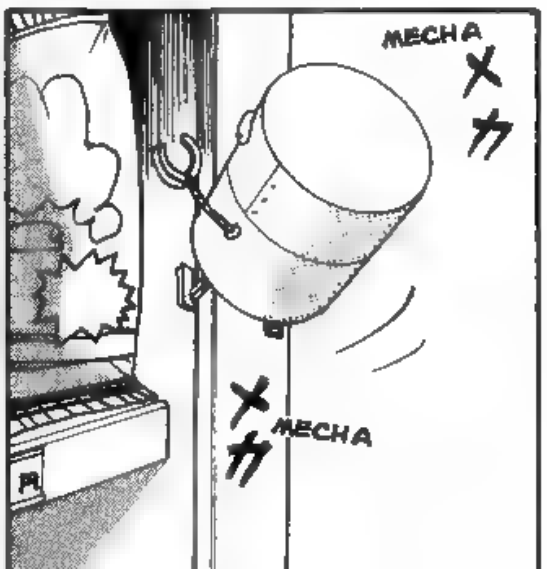
H-HE CAN RIDE THAT?!

CHAPTER 171: **WHAT IS B?**









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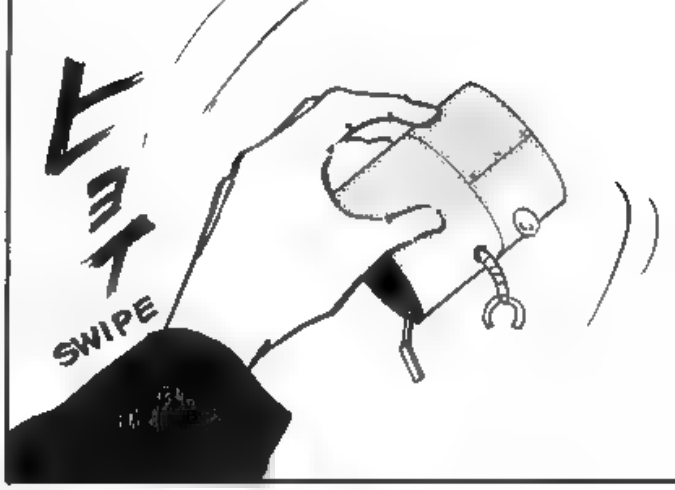
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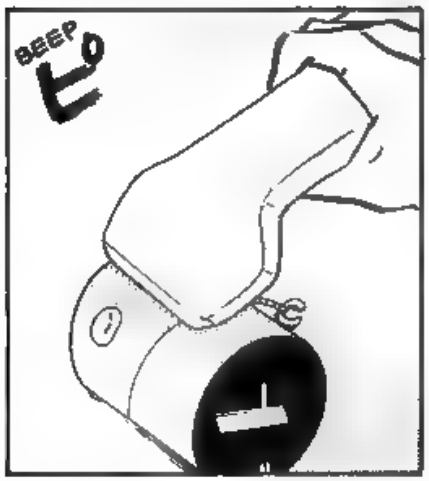
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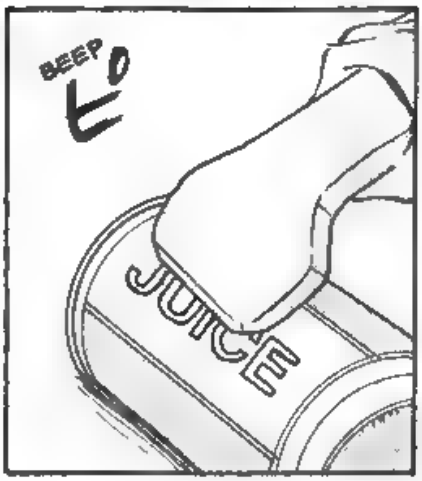
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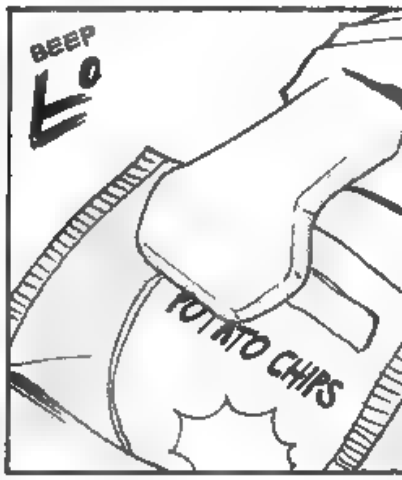
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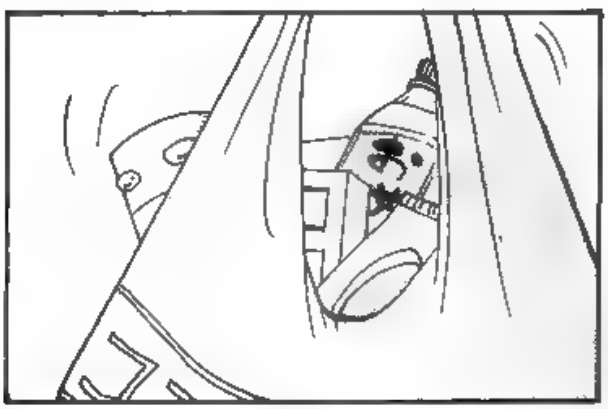
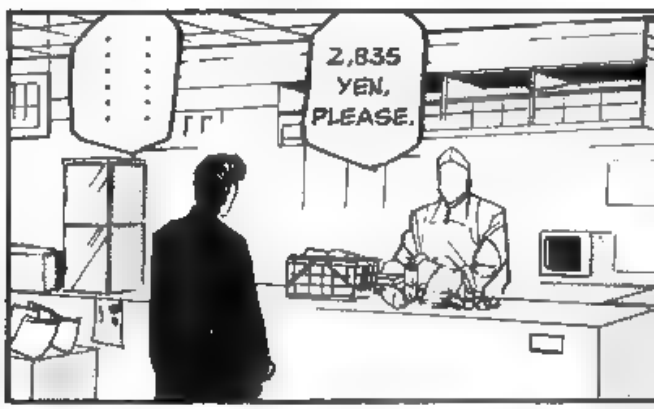
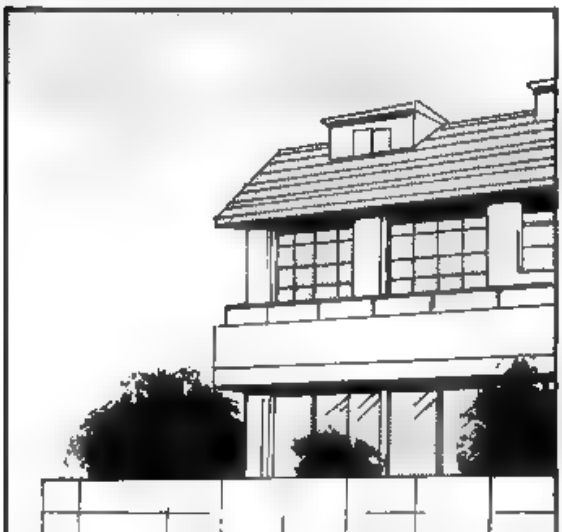
POTATO CHIPS

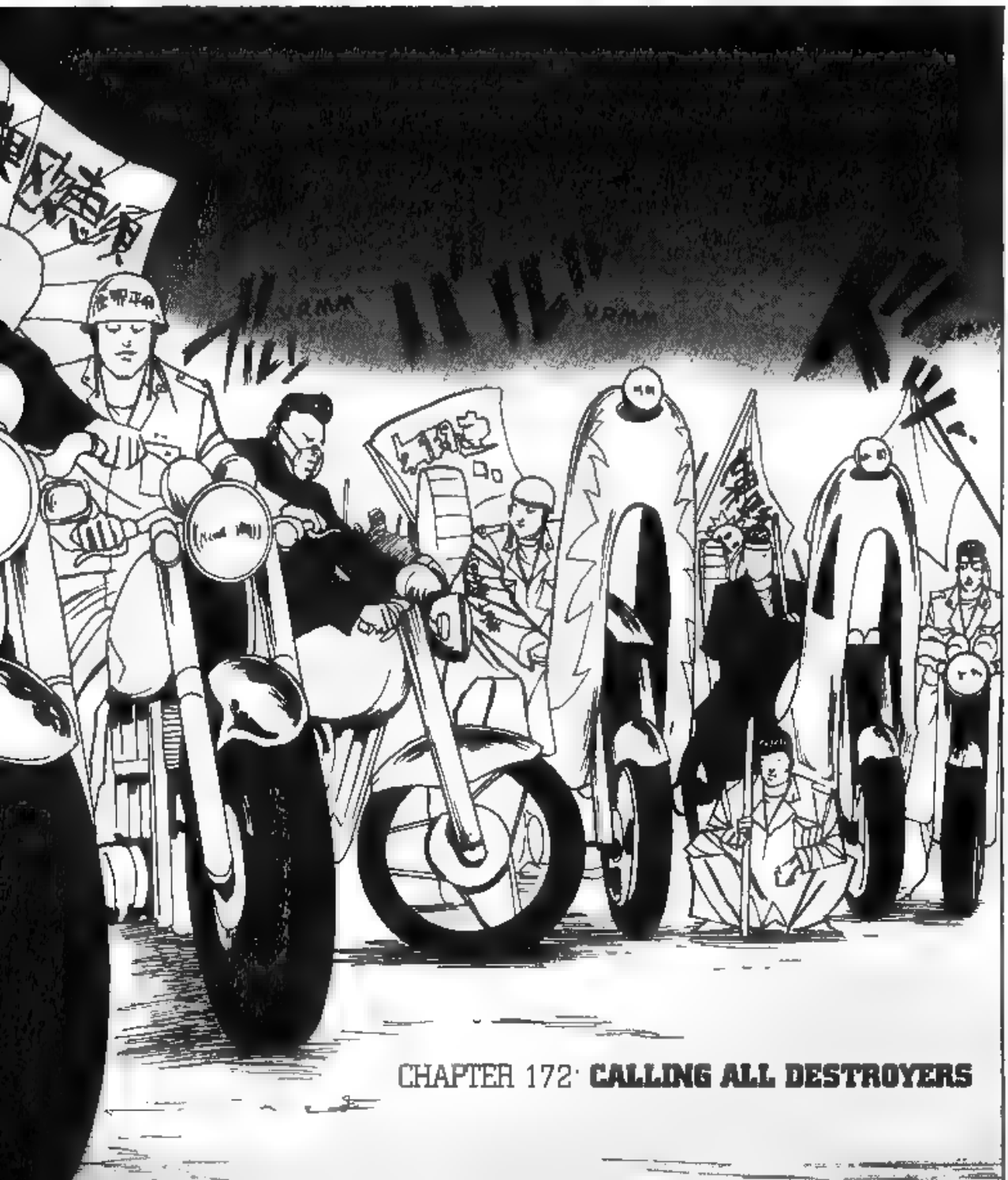



2,835 YEN, PLEASE.



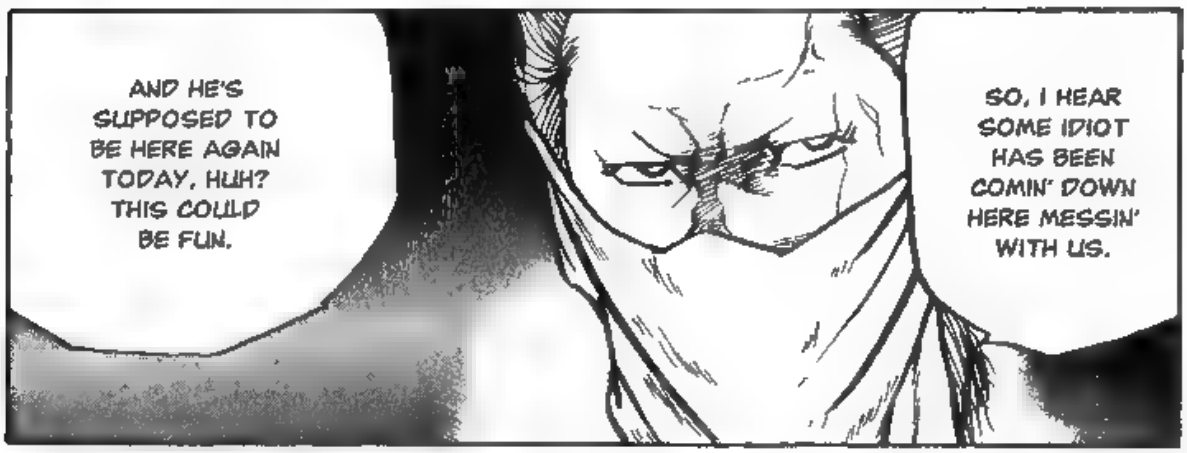
SHAKE
SHAKE

NOPE.

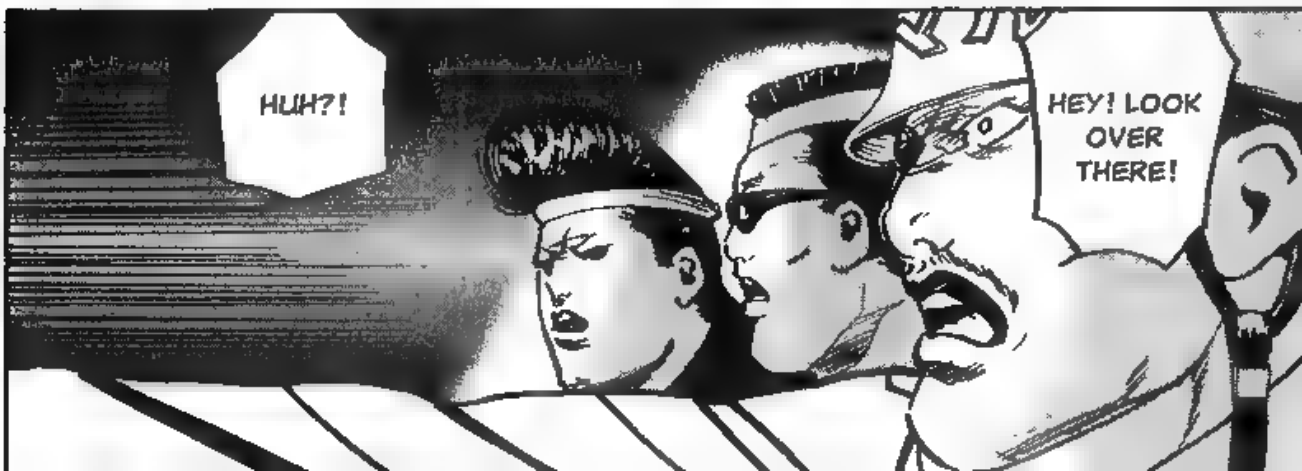


CHAPTER 172: **CALLING ALL DESTROYERS**

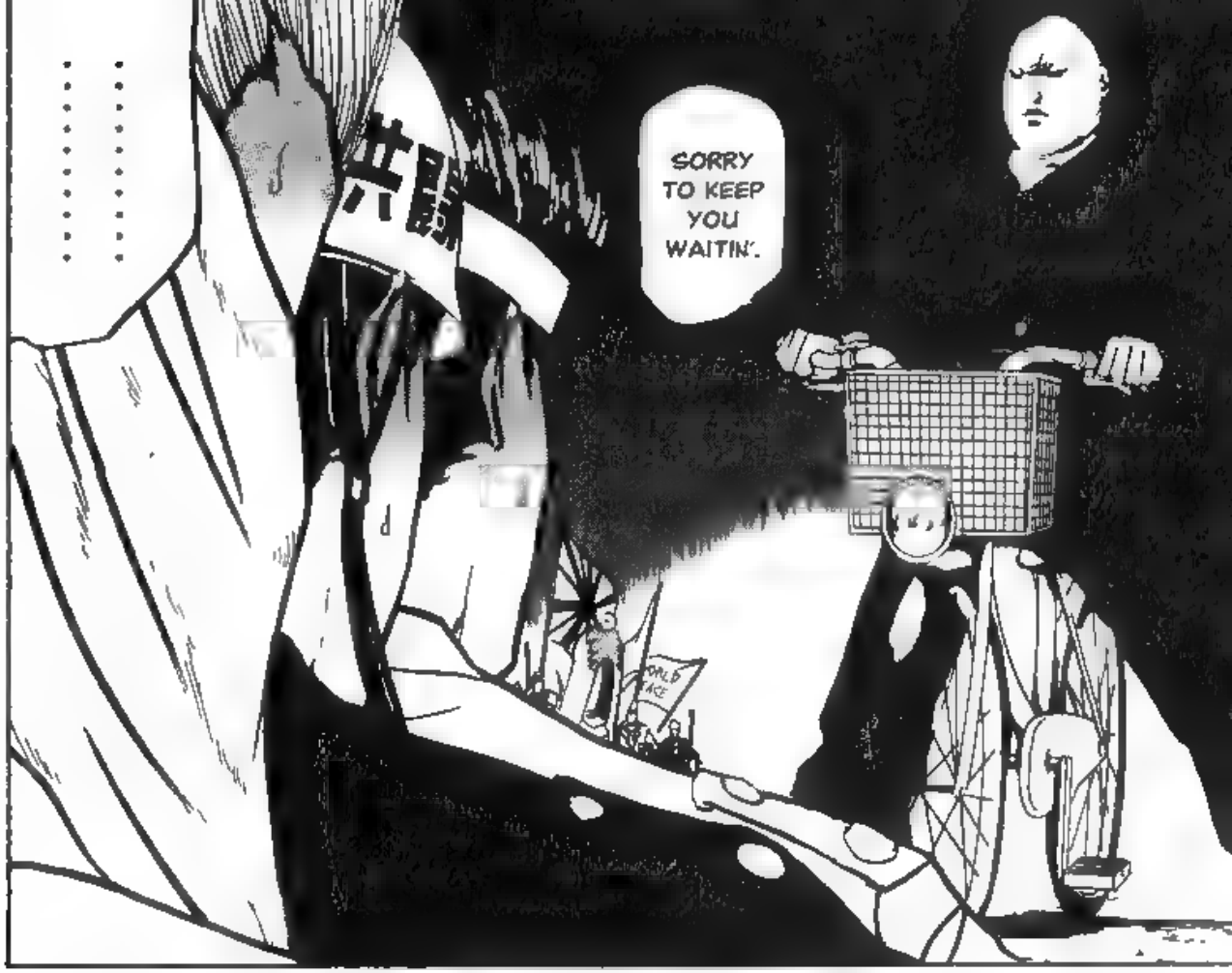
IT'S MAKOTO!
HEY.
WORLD PEACE


AND HE'S SUPPOSED TO BE HERE AGAIN TODAY, HUH? THIS COULD BE FUN.
SO, I HEAR SOME IDIOT HAS BEEN COMIN' DOWN HERE MESSIN' WITH US.

SOME GUY WE HAVEN'T SEEN AROUND HERE BEFORE...WE COULD KICK HIS ASS IN A HEARTBEAT, THOUGH.
THEY CALL US THE TOUGHEST SONS OF BITCHES AROUND, BUT SOME PUNK THINKS HE CAN JUST WALK UP AND CHALLENGE US?! WHO THE HELL IS HE?
WORLD PEACE


HUH?!
HEY! LOOK OVER THERE!

THIS GUY'S GOT SOME BRASS ONES ALRIGHT.
LOOKS LIKE HE'S IN A RUSH TO GET HIMSELF KILLED.
H-HE CAME HERE BY HIMSELF?!



LOOKS LIKE BICYCLES DON'T GIVE HIM PROBLEMS ANYMORE.

CHAPTER 173: **BAD MEDICINE**

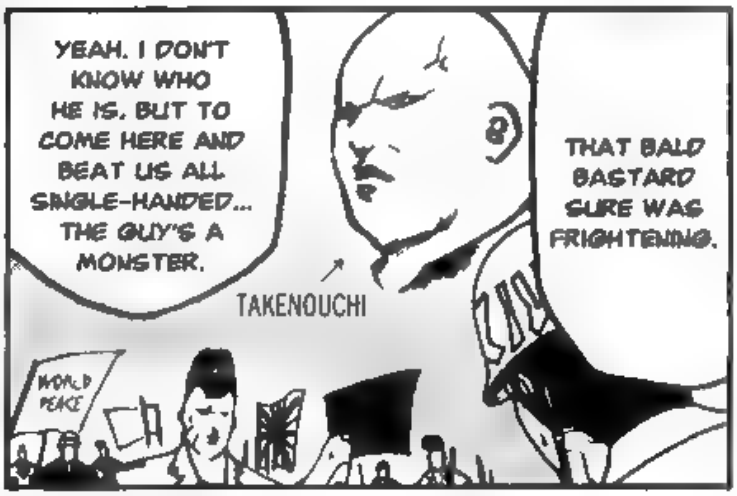
AND HOW DID YOU FEEL AFTER THAT, MR. TAKENOUCHI?
INTERNAL MEDICINE
GENERAL HOSPITAL
WELL, I THINK YOUR TREATMENT'S GOING IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION. BUT I'D LIKE YOU TO KEEP CHECKING IN WITH ME FOR A WHILE, JUST TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE.
JUST FINE. EVEN AFTER RIDING UP THAT ROAD, I WAS STILL ABLE TO KICK 20 OR SO GUYS' ASSES, NO PROBLEM.
IT'S JUST, I THINK I'D LIKE TO TRY RIDING A MOTORCYCLE SOON. WHAT DO YOU THINK?
HM?
UH, DO YOU MIND IF I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
IT'S VERY IMPORTANT THAT WE TAKE OUR TIME WITH THIS AND DON'T GO RUSHING THINGS. AT THIS STAGE, THAT WOULD BE MOST DETRIMENTAL.
I UNDERSTAND HOW YOU FEEL, BUT THESE SORTS OF THINGS HAVE TO BE TAKEN IN STEPS.

I'D LIKE TO HAVE YOU ON SOMETHING FOR YOUR MOTION SICKNESS FOR 10 DAYS, AND ON VITAMIN SUPPLEMENTS FOR FIVE.
OK.
IN THE MEANTIME, I'D LIKE TO PRESCRIBE YOU SOME MEDI-CATION.
I'LL ALSO BE GIVING YOU SOME OINTMENT.
OK.
UH, OK.
HAHA
WAHAHAHA
AHAHAHA

Vitamins
For motion sickness
Ointment

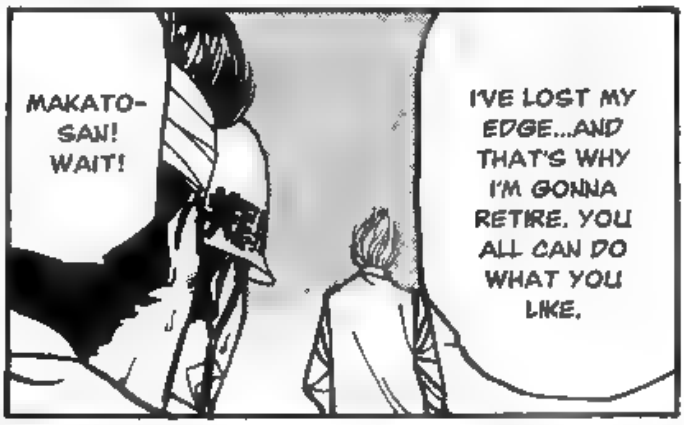
IT WOULDN'T BE ON YOUR FACE!

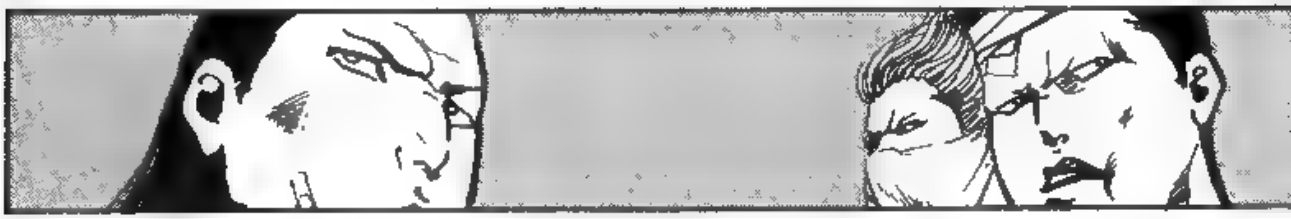
CHAPTER 174: **ROUTE 66**


YEAH. I DON'T KNOW WHO HE IS. BUT TO COME HERE AND BEAT US ALL SINGLE-HANDED... THE GUY'S A MONSTER.
TAKENOUCHI
THAT BALD BASTARD SURE WAS FRIGHTENING.
WORLD PEACE

I'M SERIOUS. THOSE WERE THE EYES OF A KILLER, OF SOMEONE WHO CALLS HELL "HOME." I'D NEVER SEEN ANYONE LIKE HIM BEFORE.
I'M SORRY. BUT THE TRUTH IS, THAT GUY PLAIN SCARED ME. THE SECOND I LOOKED INTO THOSE EYES, I JUST FROZE.

HOW LONG DO YOU PLAN TO STAND AROUND ACTIN' ALL MELODRA-MATIC, HUH?


MAKATO-SAN! WAIT!
I'VE LOST MY EDGE...AND THAT'S WHY I'M GONNA RETIRE. YOU ALL CAN DO WHAT YOU LIKE.



AND NOW'S THE PERFECT OPPORTUNITY FOR YOU TO TAKE SOME OF THESE PISSANTS ALONG WITH YOU.
IF YOU'RE GONNA QUIT, HURRY THE HELL UP AND QUIT! I'VE BEEN SICK OF YOUR ASS FOR A WHILE NOW, ANYWAY.

WAIT A MINUTE! SURE MAKOTO-SAN TOOK OFF AND RAN, BUT WHAT THE HELL?!
. . . . . .
WHAT'S SO DAMN FUNNY?!
HEH HEH
HOW MANY TIMES HAS HE PUT HIS LIFE ON THE LINE FOR THE REST OF US, HUH? HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN HOW MUCH WE ALL OWE HIM?
AND CRYIN' OVER THE DEAD IS JUST A WASTE OF TIME.
LOOK, YOU IDIOT. ONCE A BADASS TAKES OFF AND RUNS, HE MIGHT AS WELL BE DEAD.

IT'S LIKE HE SAID--I'M THE LOSER HERE. I'VE ALREADY SAID I'M GONNA QUIT, SO I'VE GOT NO MORE RIGHTS ANYMORE.

IT'S ALRIGHT.
WHAT DID YOU SAY?!

HOW-EVER.

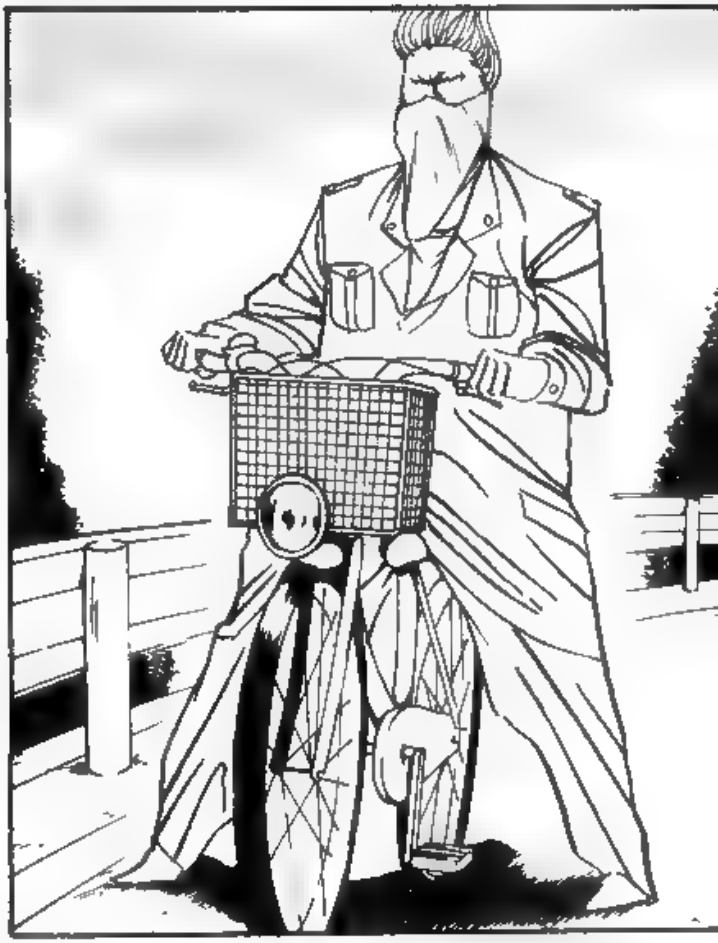
HMPH! GIVE IT A REST ALREADY. YOU KEEP TRYIN' TO LOOK COOL, YOU'LL JUST END UP REGRETTIN' IT LATER.
I MAY NOT HAVE DONE SUCH A GOOD JOB, BUT I **WAS** THE LEADER OF THIS GROUP. YOU SHOULD REMEMBER THAT.

MAKOTO-SAN...
SEE YA. YOU GUYS ARE ON YOUR OWN.

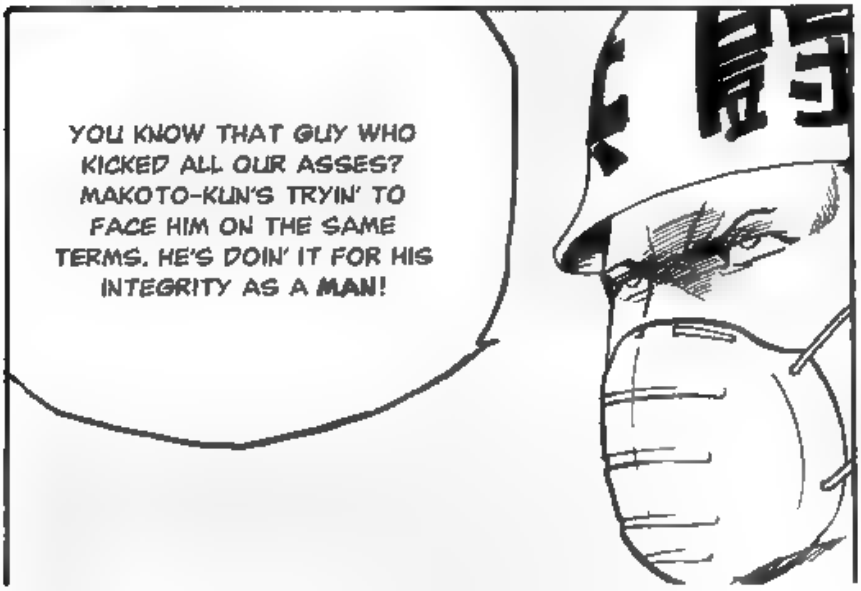
YEAH, BUT... THERE'S NO WAY I CAN DEFEND HOW HE JUST TOOK OFF AND RAN.
I'M STILL NOT TOO HAPPY ABOUT THIS. MAKOTO-SAN'S LOOKED OUT FOR US EVER SINCE WE JOINED THE GROUP. DON'T YOU FEEL THE SAME WAY?!
WHAT IS IT?
DUDE, THIS IS BAD!
UH, I THINK YOU SHOULD COME TO THE ROAD WITH ME.
HE WHAT? SPIT IT OUT ALREADY!
IT'S MAKOTO-SAN! HE... WELL...

WHOA!
LOOK. OVER THERE.

WH-WHAT THE HECK IS HE DOING?! WHY IS HE ON A BICYCLE?

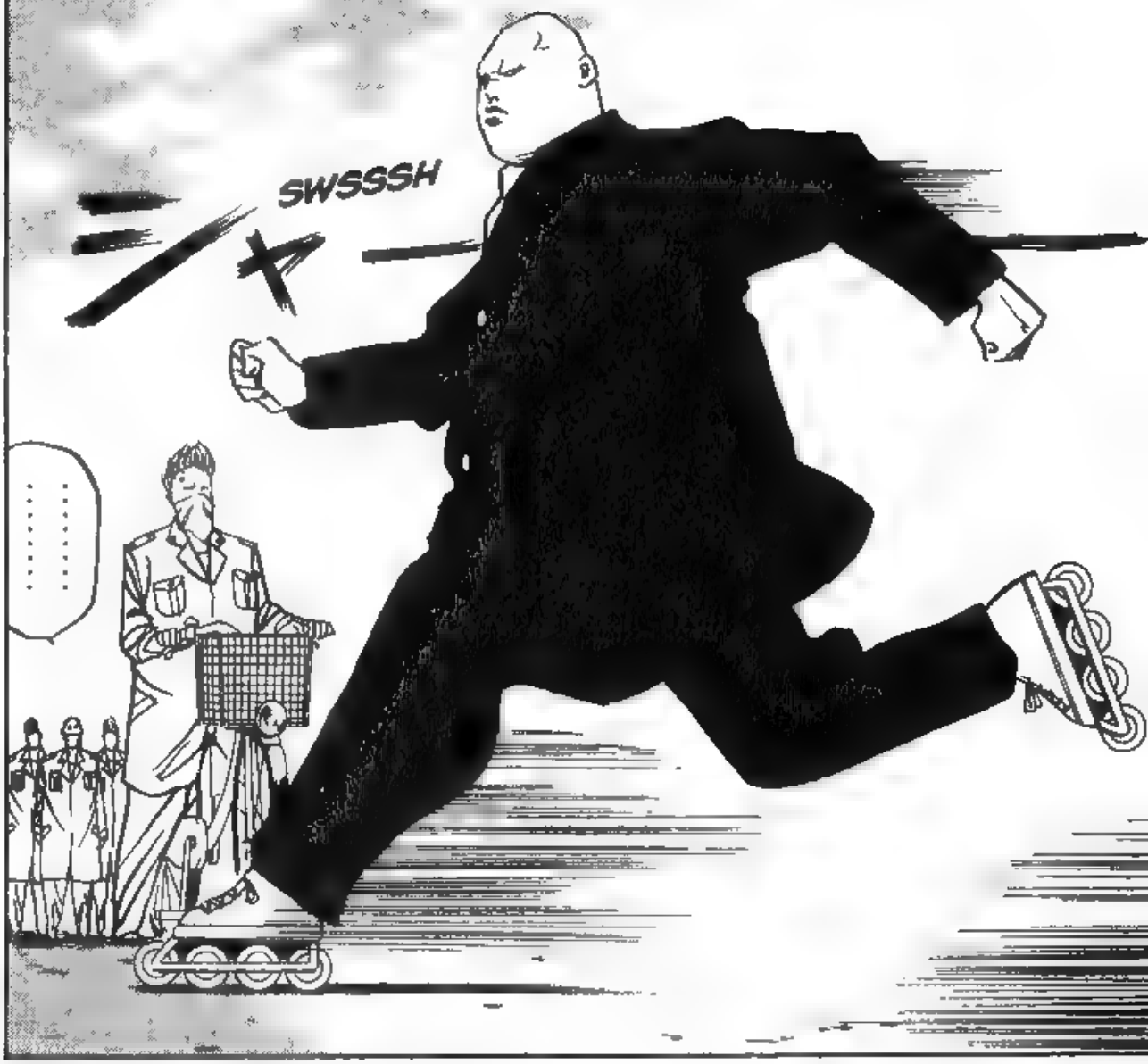


I'M SPEECH-LESS.
DON'T TELL ME THAT QUITTIN' THE GROUP WAS SUCH A SHOCK THAT HE'S GONE ALL FUNNY!


YOU KNOW THAT GUY WHO KICKED ALL OUR ASSES? MAKOTO-KUN'S TRYIN' TO FACE HIM ON THE SAME TERMS. HE'S DOIN' IT FOR HIS INTEGRITY AS A MAN!

HUH?!
NO, THAT'S NOT IT.

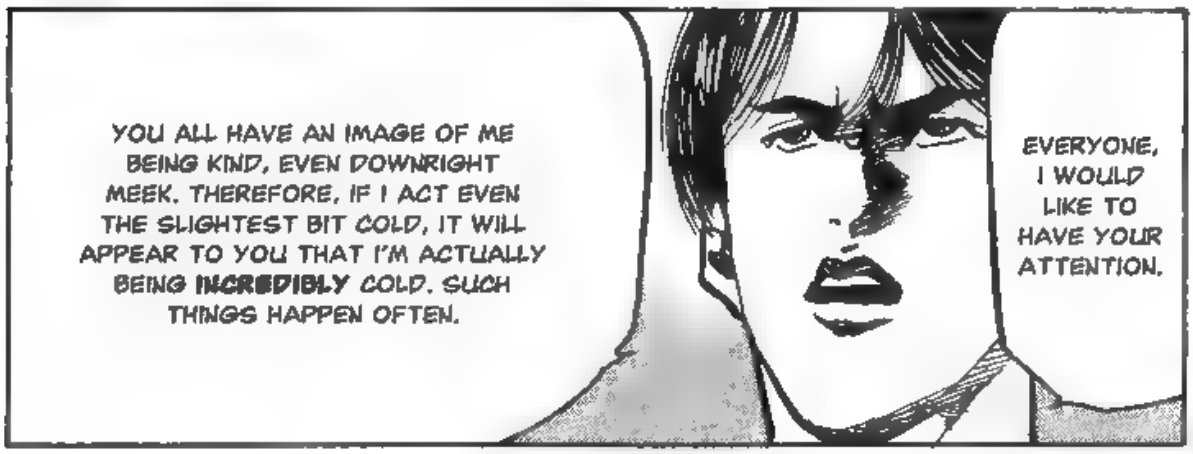
SWSSSH
OH. I DON'T REALLY GET IT, BUT MAKOTO-KUN'S TRYING, IN HIS OWN WAY, TO BE A MAN AND TAKE RESPONSIBILITY, HUH?
MAKOTO-KUN THINKS THAT IF HE GETS ON A BICYCLE AND WAITS HERE BY THIS MOUNTAIN ROAD, THAT GUY WILL SHOW UP AGAIN.
THAT'S GOTTA BE HIM!
HE'S COMING!
SWSSSH
I HEARD IT, TOO!
HUH? THAT SOUNDED KINDA LIKE A BICYCLE.

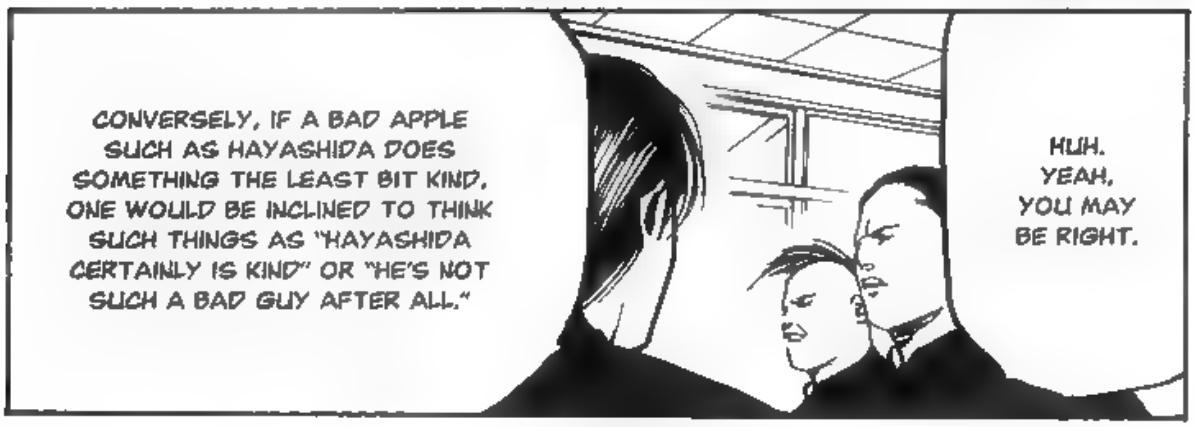


YEAH, THEY DON'T HAVE A STEERING WHEEL.

CHAPTER 175: **STONE COLD CRAZY**

YEAH. YOU'RE ACTING DIFFERENTLY LATELY!
IT'S JUST, I THINK YOU USED TO BE A LOT KINDER WHEN YOU FIRST GOT HERE.
HOW IS MY TURNING DOWN AN INVITATION TO EAT "COLD"? I'M SIMPLY NOT HUNGRY.

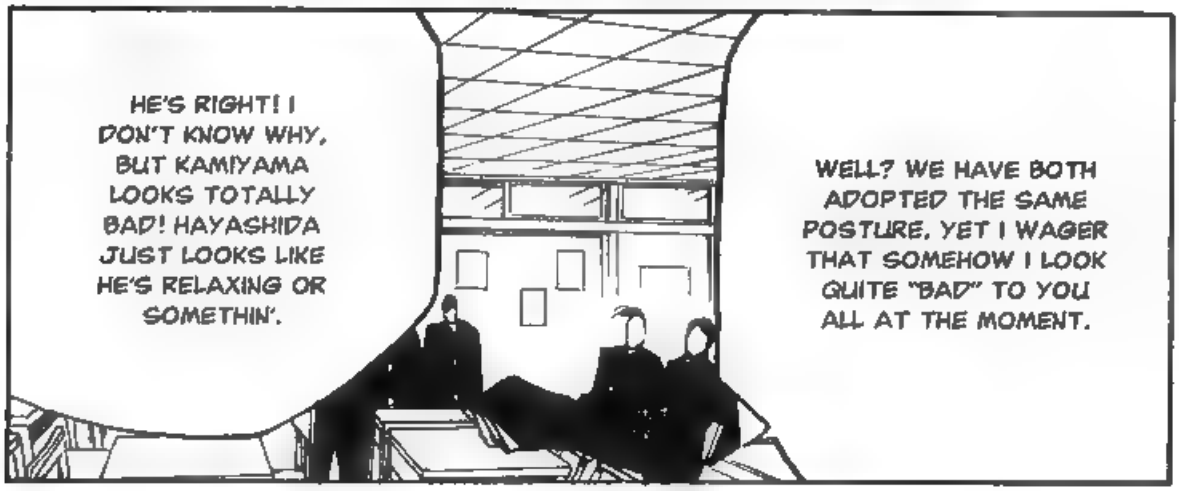

YOU ALL HAVE AN IMAGE OF ME BEING KIND, EVEN DOWNRIGHT MEEK. THEREFORE, IF I ACT EVEN THE SLIGHTEST BIT COLD, IT WILL APPEAR TO YOU THAT I'M ACTUALLY BEING **INCREDIBLY** COLD. SUCH THINGS HAPPEN OFTEN.
EVERYONE, I WOULD LIKE TO HAVE YOUR ATTENTION.


CONVERSELY, IF A BAD APPLE SUCH AS HAYASHIDA DOES SOMETHING THE LEAST BIT KIND, ONE WOULD BE INCLINED TO THINK SUCH THINGS AS "HAYASHIDA CERTAINLY IS KIND" OR "HE'S NOT SUCH A BAD GUY AFTER ALL."
HUH. YEAH, YOU MAY BE RIGHT.

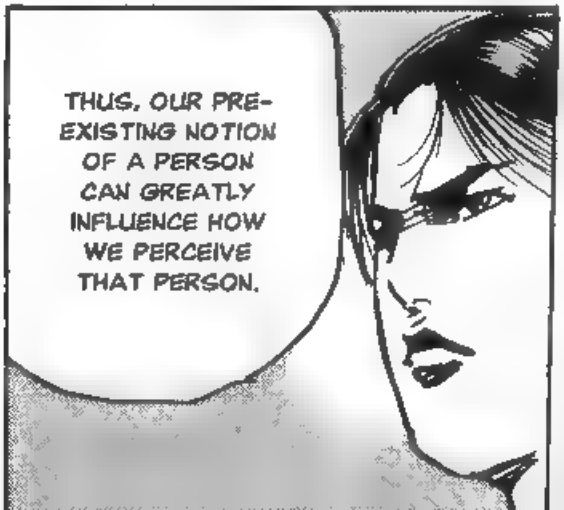
LET'S SAY I PUT MY FEET UP ON MY DESK, THUSLY.
FOR EXAMPLE.

OH, THAT MAKES SENSE.
THERE ARE ANY NUMBER OF INSTANCES THAT COULD GIVE RISE TO THIS ERROR IN PERCEPTION, WHICH IS WHY IT MAY APPEAR TO YOU THAT I AM BEING "COLD."

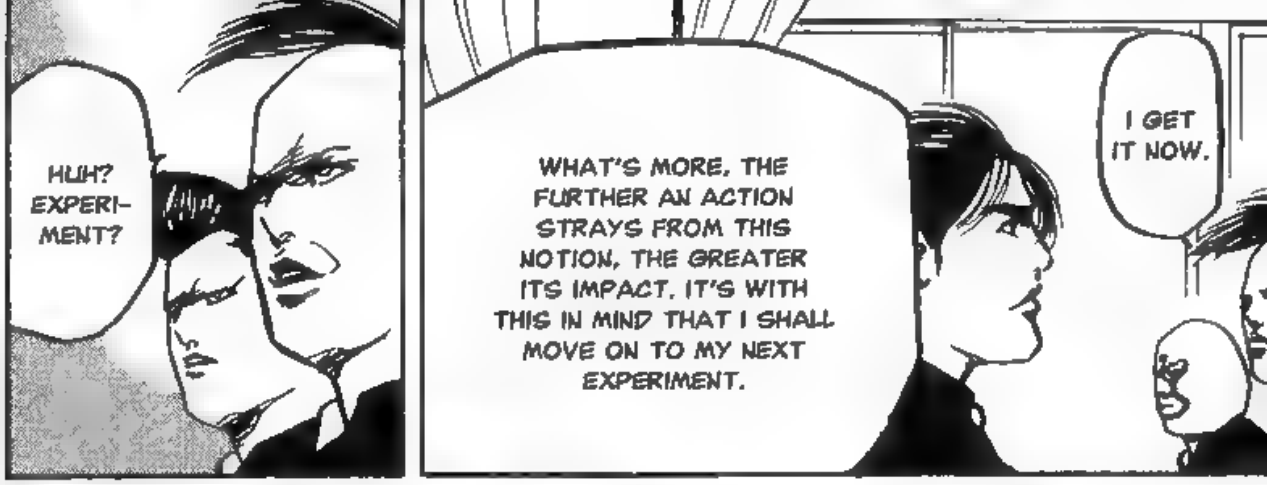
LIKE THIS?
HAYASHIDA-KUN, WOULD YOU MIND PLEASE DOING THE SAME?


HE'S RIGHT! I DON'T KNOW WHY, BUT KAMIYAMA LOOKS TOTALLY BAD! HAYASHIDA JUST LOOKS LIKE HE'S RELAXING OR SOMETHIN'.
WELL? WE HAVE BOTH ADOPTED THE SAME POSTURE, YET I WAGER THAT SOMEHOW I LOOK QUITE "BAD" TO YOU ALL AT THE MOMENT.

NEXT, WE'LL BOTH PICK UP A BOOK AS IF TO READ IT.

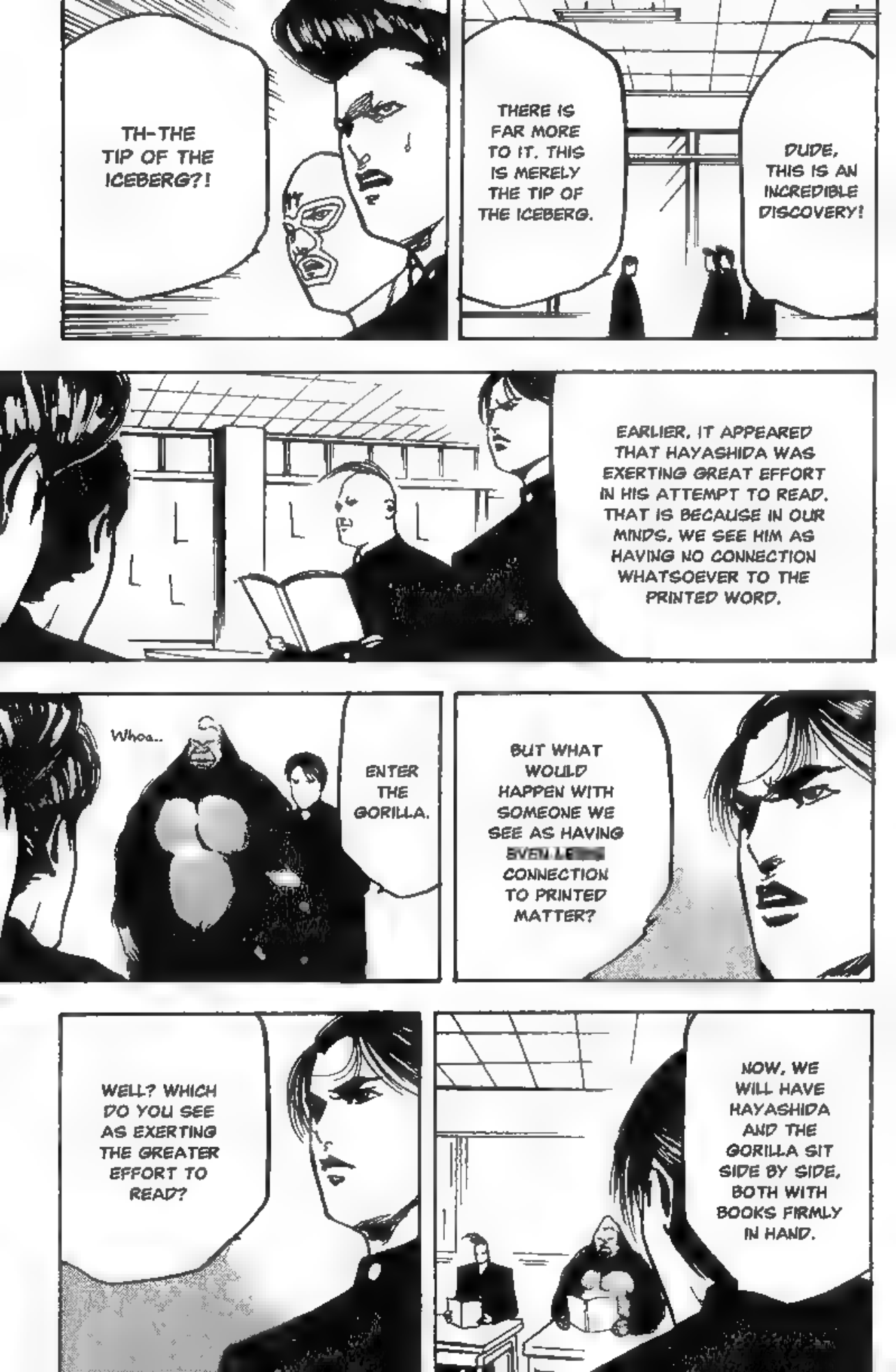

THUS, OUR PRE-EXISTING NOTION OF A PERSON CAN GREATLY INFLUENCE HOW WE PERCEIVE THAT PERSON.

YEAH! AND KAMIYAMA JUST LOOKS LIKE HE'S READIN' TO PASS THE TIME!
DOES IT NOT APPEAR FOR SOME REASON THAT HAYASHIDA-KUN IS EXERTING GREAT EFFORT IN HIS ATTEMPT TO READ?


HUH? EXPERI-MENT?
WHAT'S MORE, THE FURTHER AN ACTION STRAYS FROM THIS NOTION, THE GREATER ITS IMPACT. IT'S WITH THIS IN MIND THAT I SHALL MOVE ON TO MY NEXT EXPERIMENT.
I GET IT NOW.

I'LL FRICKIN' KILL YOU.

YOU SEE? IF A PERSON WHO IS CONSTANTLY ANGRY LOSES HIS TEMPER, IT'S NOT ALTOGETHER FRIGHTENING. WHEN SOMEONE WHO DOES NOT NORMALLY LOSE HIS TEMPER DOES SO, HOWEVER, IT IS QUITE FRIGHTENING, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?
I WAS SO SCARED I WAS ABOUT TO HAND OVER MY LUNCH MONEY!
WH-WHOA! DAMN, KAMIYAMA! THAT WAS TOTALLY SCARY!


TH-THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG?!
THERE IS FAR MORE TO IT. THIS IS MERELY THE TIP OF THE ICEBERG.
DUDE, THIS IS AN INCREDIBLE DISCOVERY!
EARLIER, IT APPEARED THAT HAYASHIDA WAS EXERTING GREAT EFFORT IN HIS ATTEMPT TO READ. THAT IS BECAUSE IN OUR MINDS, WE SEE HIM AS HAVING NO CONNECTION WHATSOEVER TO THE PRINTED WORD.
Whoa..
ENTER THE GORILLA.
BUT WHAT WOULD HAPPEN WITH SOMEONE WE SEE AS HAVING [redacted] CONNECTION TO PRINTED MATTER?
WELL? WHICH DO YOU SEE AS EXERTING THE GREATER EFFORT TO READ?
NOW, WE WILL HAVE HAYASHIDA AND THE GORILLA SIT SIDE BY SIDE, BOTH WITH BOOKS FIRMLY IN HAND.

Things are taking a turn for the strange.
INDEED.
WHOA! NOW THE GORILLA LOOKS LIKE HE'S THE ONE WHO'S TRYIN' HARDER!

I DON'T KNOW IF YOU COULD CALL THIS "BOOK READING" OR NOT, BUT THE PRINCIPLE HAS GOTTA BE, LIKE, APPLICABLE IN OTHER SITUATIONS, TOO.
THIS IS FRIGGIN INCREDIBLE! BEFORE, HAYASHIDA LOOKED LIKE HE WAS SOME KINDA HARDCORE READER, BUT THIS BLOWS THAT AWAY!

Banana
FIRST, WE'LL HAVE THE GORILLA HOLD A BANANA, AS HE SO OFTEN DOES.

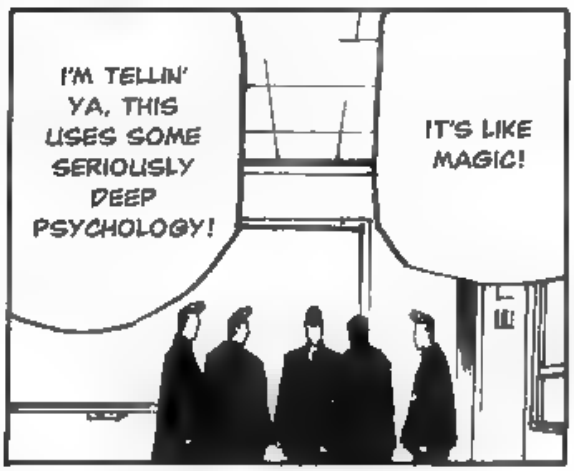
THE NEXT STEP?
YOU'VE UNDERSTOOD WELL. LET US PROCEED TO THE NEXT STEP.

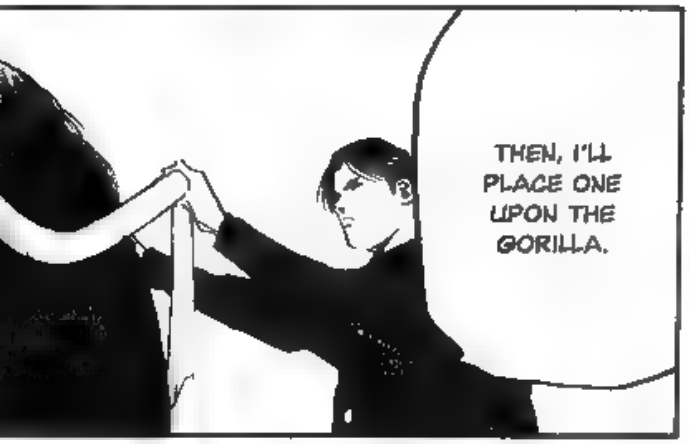
Microphone
NOW, HOWEVER, WE WILL EXCHANGE THE BANANA FOR THIS MICROPHONE.

INDEED. NOTHING SPECIAL.
THERE'S NOTHIN' SPECIAL ABOUT THAT. WE SEE HIM HOLDIN' THAT ALL THE TIME.

WHOA! THE GORILLA LOOKS LIKE HE'D BE REALLY GREAT AT IT, LIKE HE COULD START CROONING ANY MINUTE!
EVERYONE LOOK CLOSELY. WHICH OF US WOULD YOU SAY APPEARS TO BE THE BETTER AT SINGING, MYSELF OR THE GORILLA?

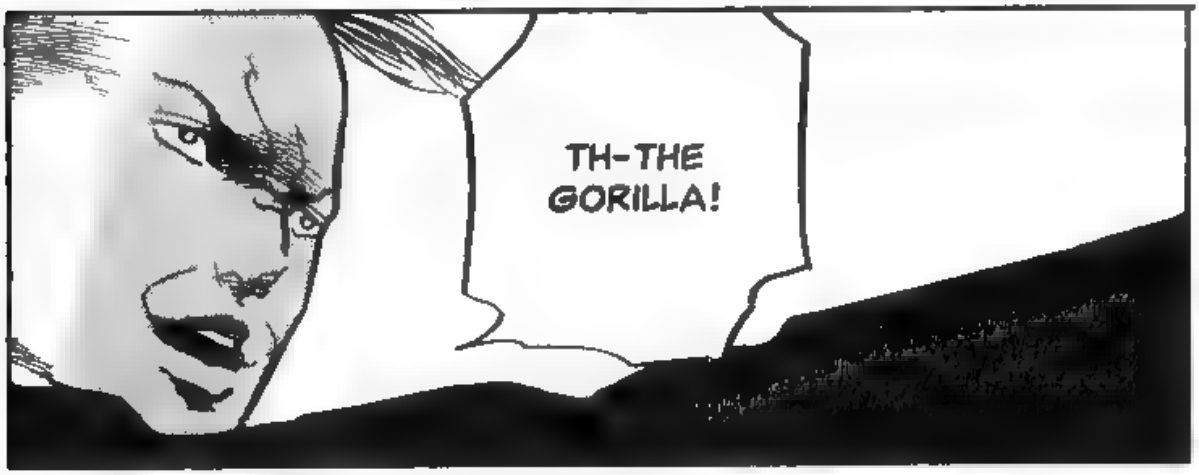
THERE'S STILL MORE?
AND NOW ON TO THE FINAL PHASE-- A TEST TO GAUGE YOUR FACULTY OF REASON.


I'M TELLIN' YA, THIS USES SOME SERIOUSLY DEEP PSYCHOLOGY!
IT'S LIKE MAGIC!


THEN, I'LL PLACE ONE UPON THE GORILLA.

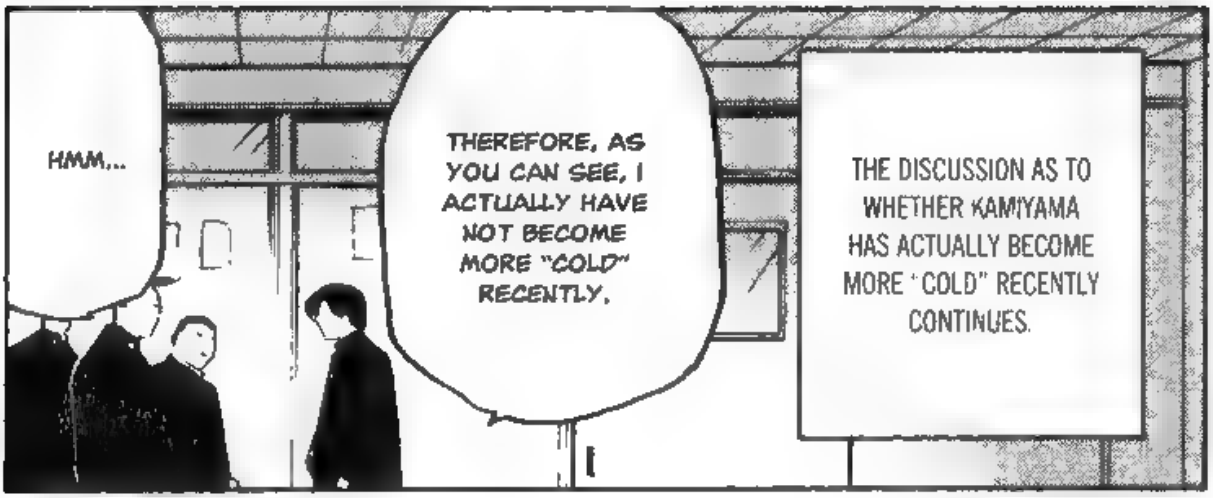
FIRST, I SHALL ADORN THIS SASH.

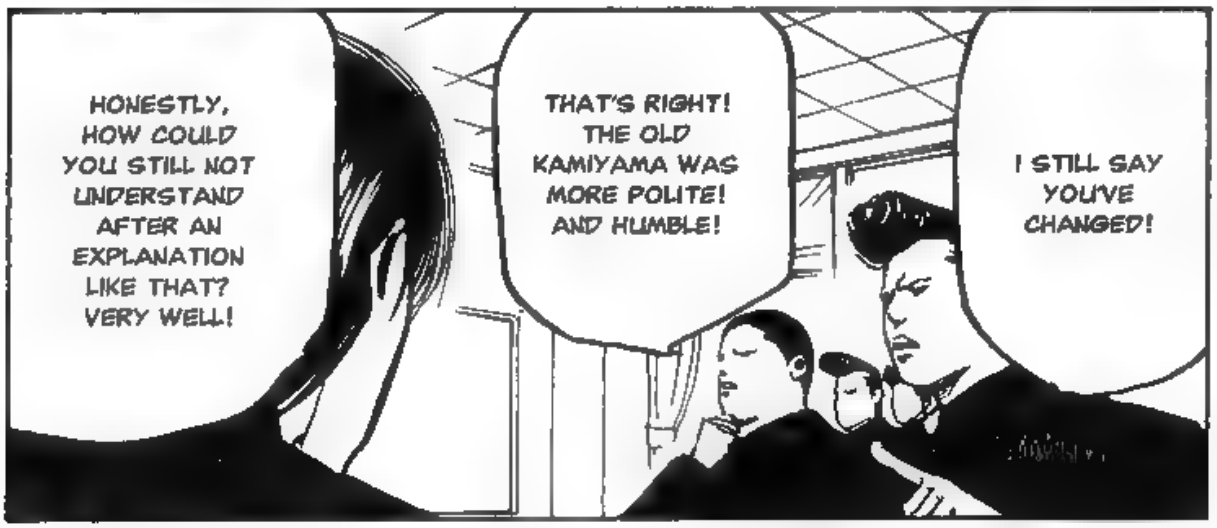
AND?
NOW WE HOLD OUR MICS THUSLY.



NONE OF YOU ARE EVEN *ALLOWED* TO VOTE.

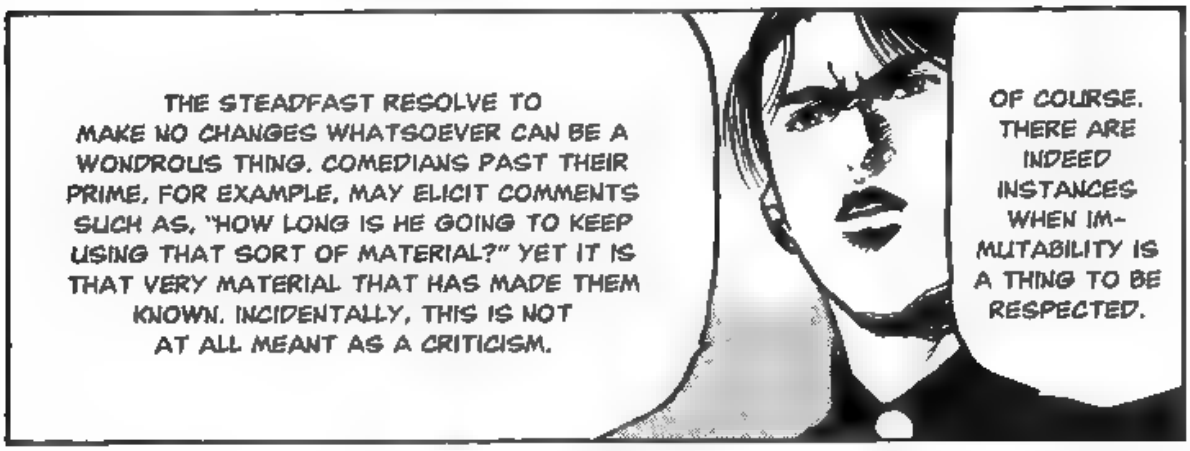
CHAPTER 176: ONE MORE TIME


HMM...
THEREFORE, AS YOU CAN SEE, I ACTUALLY HAVE NOT BECOME MORE "COLD" RECENTLY.
THE DISCUSSION AS TO WHETHER KAMIYAMA HAS ACTUALLY BECOME MORE "COLD" RECENTLY CONTINUES.


HONESTLY, HOW COULD YOU STILL NOT UNDERSTAND AFTER AN EXPLANATION LIKE THAT? VERY WELL!
THAT'S RIGHT! THE OLD KAMIYAMA WAS MORE POLITE! AND HUMBLE!
I STILL SAY YOU'VE CHANGED!

BUT ONE CANNOT SAY THAT "CHANGE" IS CATEGORICALLY BAD. INDEED, WITHOUT CHANGE, WE CANNOT EVOLVE.
I AM WILLING TO CONCEDE THAT I MAY IN SOME RESPECTS HAVE CHANGED...

BUT THERE'S TIMES WHEN SOMETHING ALWAYS STAYIN' THE SAME IS PART OF WHAT MAKES IT GOOD. LIKE, THE FACT THAT IT DOESN'T CHANGE MAKES YOU FEEL SORT OF RELIEVED...SAFE, EVEN. YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
YEAH, I GET YOUR POINT.

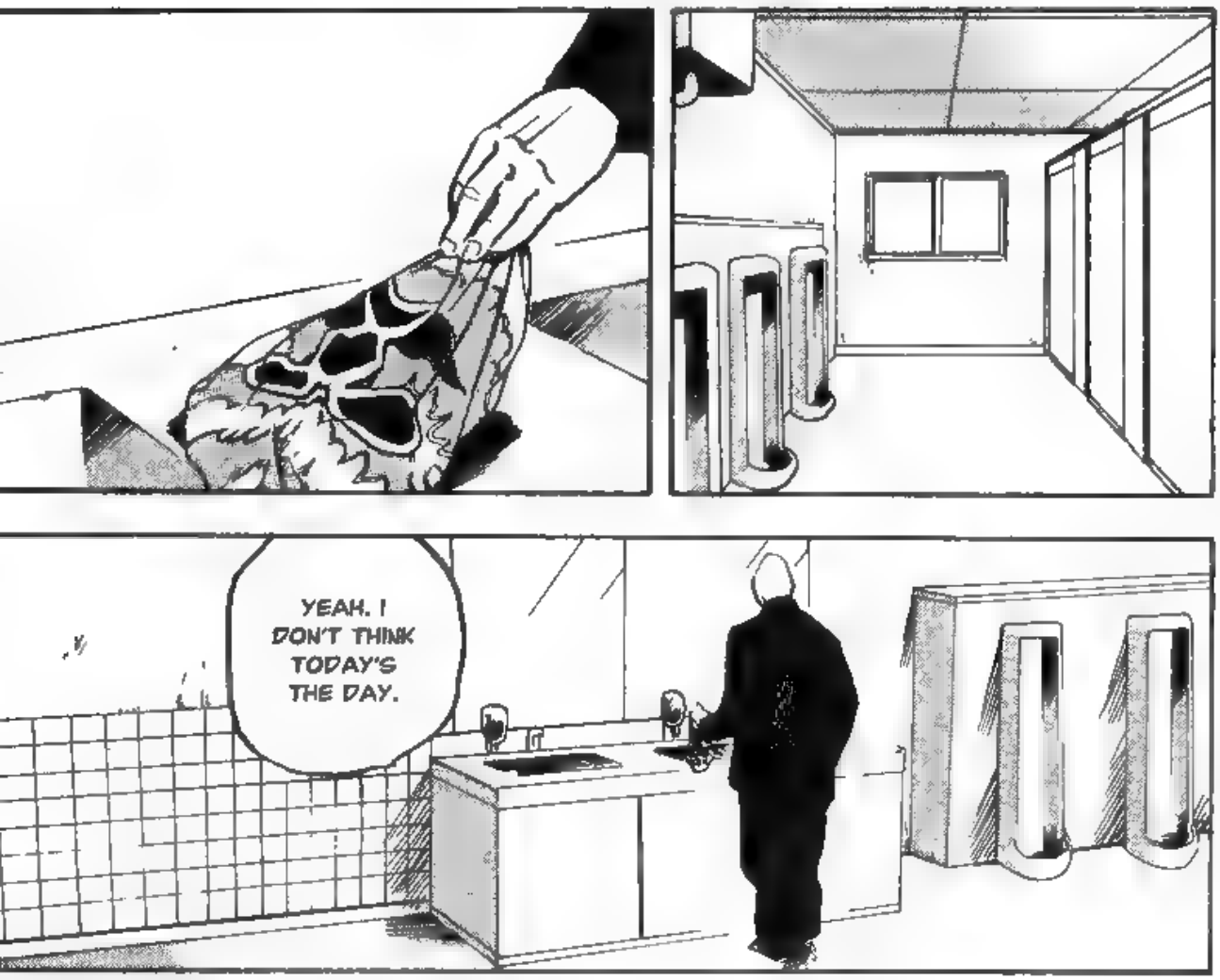

THE STEADFAST RESOLVE TO MAKE NO CHANGES WHATSOEVER CAN BE A WONDROUS THING. COMEDIANS PAST THEIR PRIME, FOR EXAMPLE, MAY ELICIT COMMENTS SUCH AS, "HOW LONG IS HE GOING TO KEEP USING THAT SORT OF MATERIAL?" YET IT IS THAT VERY MATERIAL THAT HAS MADE THEM KNOWN. INCIDENTALLY, THIS IS NOT AT ALL MEANT AS A CRITICISM.
OF COURSE. THERE ARE INDEED INSTANCES WHEN IM-MUTABILITY IS A THING TO BE RESPECTED.

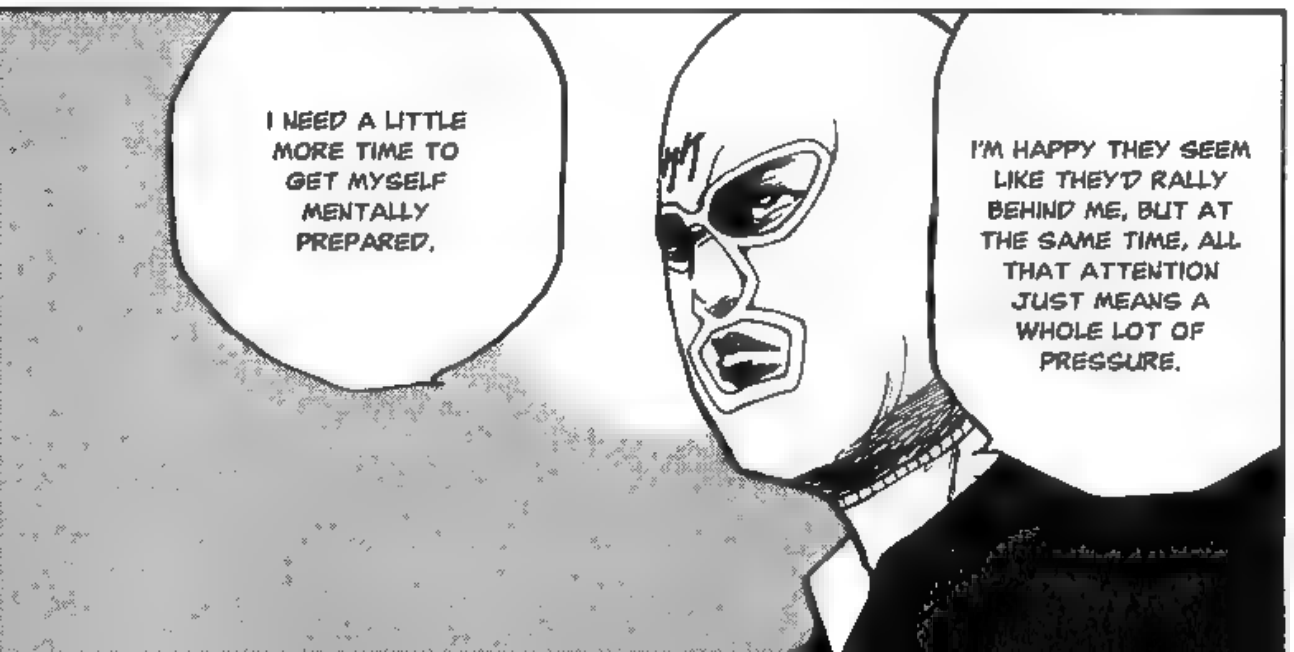
FOR EXAMPLE, EVEN ESPECIALLY STUDIOUS FEMALE STUDENTS ARE KNOWN TO SUDDENLY BLEACH THEIR HAIR AT THE END OF SUMMER VACATION.
THIS IS KINDA COMPLI-CATED.
SIMPLY PUT, BOTH CHANGE AND IMMUTABILITY ARE TO BE RESPECTED. IT CANNOT BE SAID THAT ONE IS BETTER THAN THE OTHER.

YES, AND THEN THE WHISPERING BEGINS, OF HOW THOSE STUDENTS MUST HAVE DONE SO-AND-SO WITH SUCH-AND-SUCH. I'LL SAY IT RIGHT NOW, GENTLEMEN--THAT IS NOT A GOOD THING!
YEAH, THAT DOES HAPPEN, ESPECIALLY RIGHT AT THE END OF SUMMER. THERE'S ALWAYS A BUNCH OF DUDES WHO ARE SHOCKED WHEN THEY SEE THAT ON THE FIRST DAY OF THE NEXT SEMESTER.

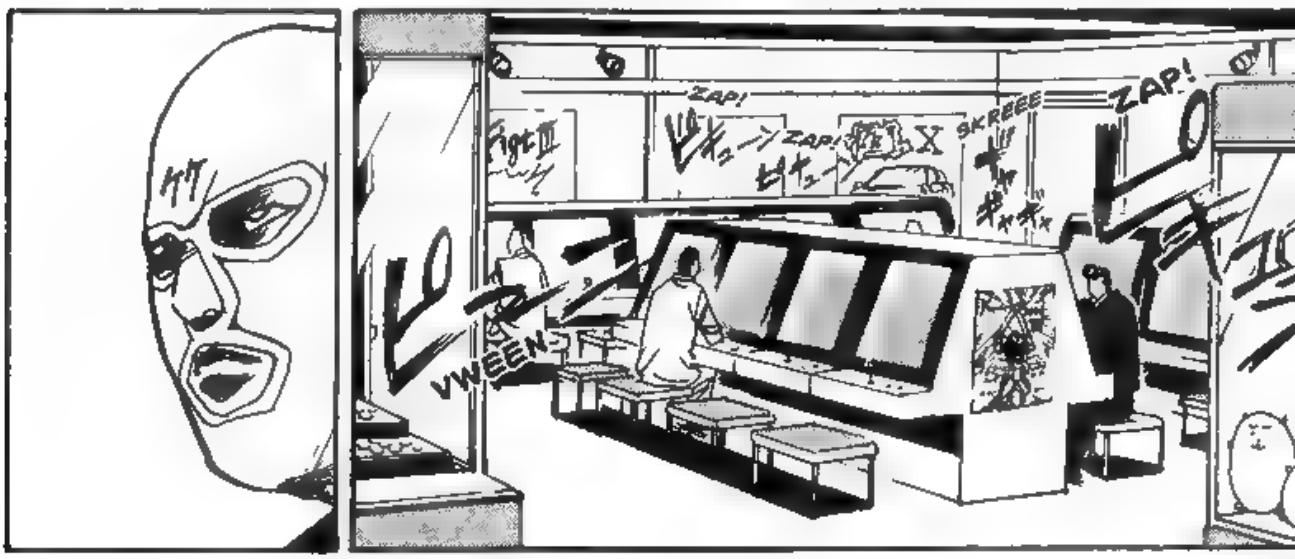
SUDDENLY UNDERGOING SUCH A DRASTIC CHANGE IN APPEARANCE TAKES BOTH RESOLVE AND DETERMINATION.
IN A SENSE, IT MAKES THEM PIONEERS!
BUT IT MAKES YOU WONDER, RIGHT? LIKE, WHAT HAPPENED TO MAKE 'EM WANT TO DO THAT?
NO MATTER HOW STUDIOUS PEOPLE MAY BE, PRYING INTO EVERY ASPECT OF THEIR LIVES SIMPLY BECAUSE THEY CHOSE TO BLEACH THEIR HAIR SHOULD NOT BE DONE!
BUT THAT WOULD MAKE THEM FEEL LONELY, YES? AS IF THEY'D LOST THEIR FRIENDS.
SO, WHAT? WE SHOULD JUST IGNORE IT?
ALRIGHT! WE'LL ALL STAND BEHIND ANYONE WHO MAKES A CHANGE LIKE THAT!
YEAH! DOIN' THAT DOES TAKE A LOT OF GUTS, HUH?
AND I FOR ONE WISH TO SUPPORT TO THAT PIONEERING SPIRIT!

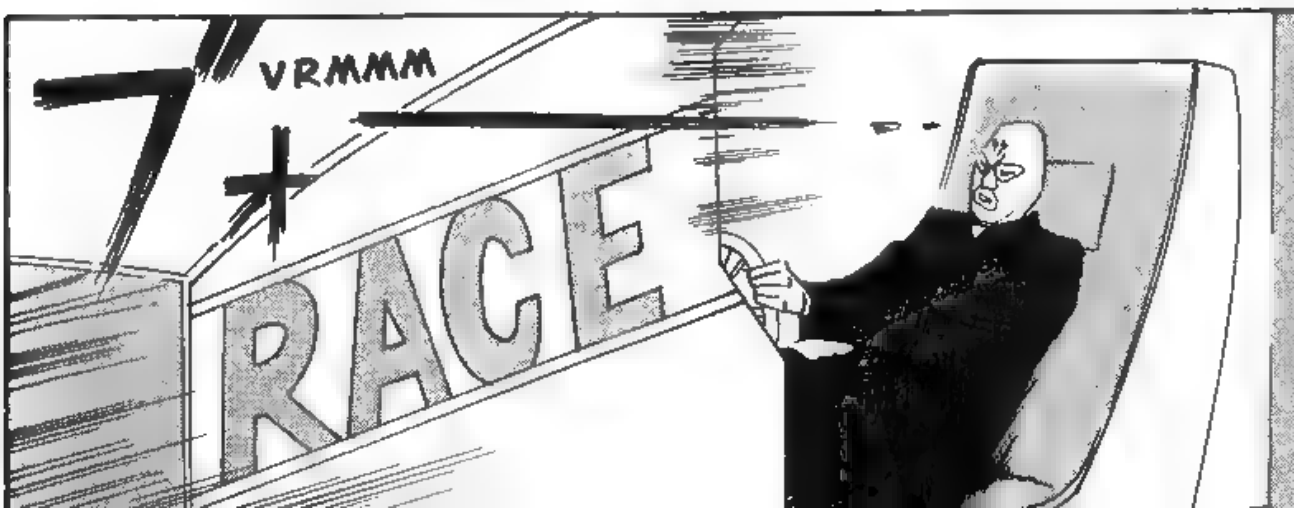
M-MASKED TAKENOUCHI!

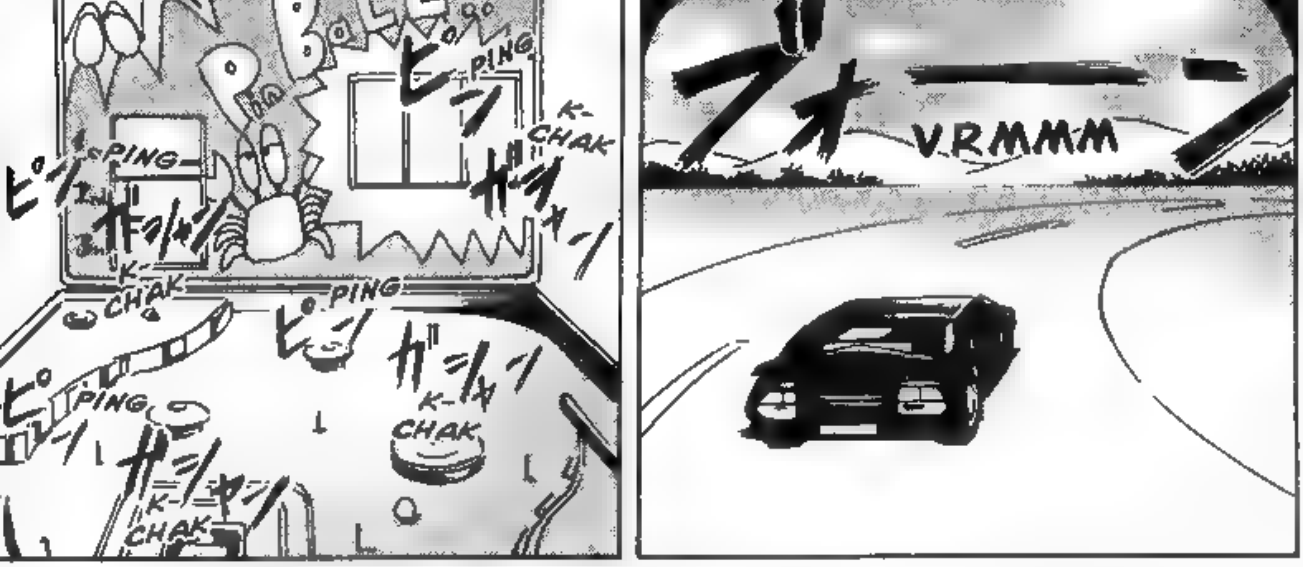

YEAH. I DON'T THINK TODAY'S THE DAY.

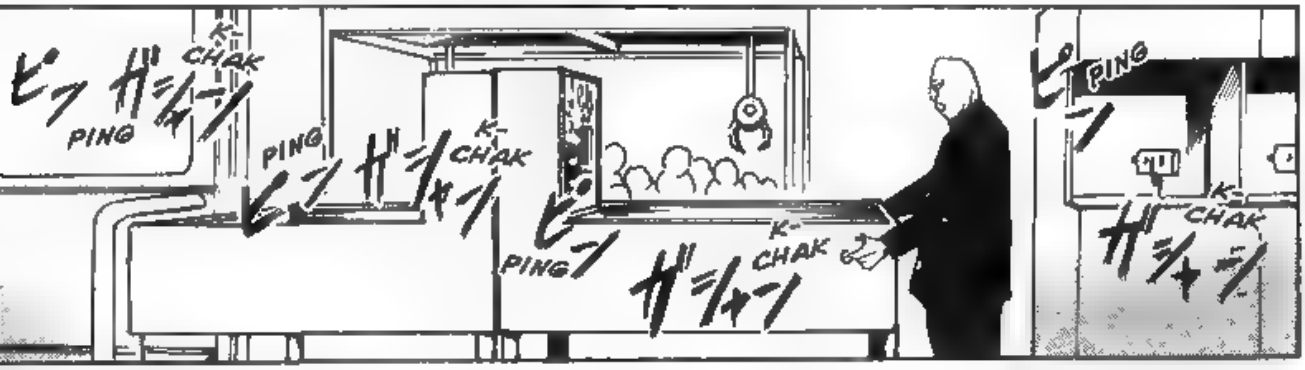

I NEED A LITTLE MORE TIME TO GET MYSELF MENTALLY PREPARED.
I'M HAPPY THEY SEEM LIKE THEY'D RALLY BEHIND ME, BUT AT THE SAME TIME, ALL THAT ATTENTION JUST MEANS A WHOLE LOT OF PRESSURE.

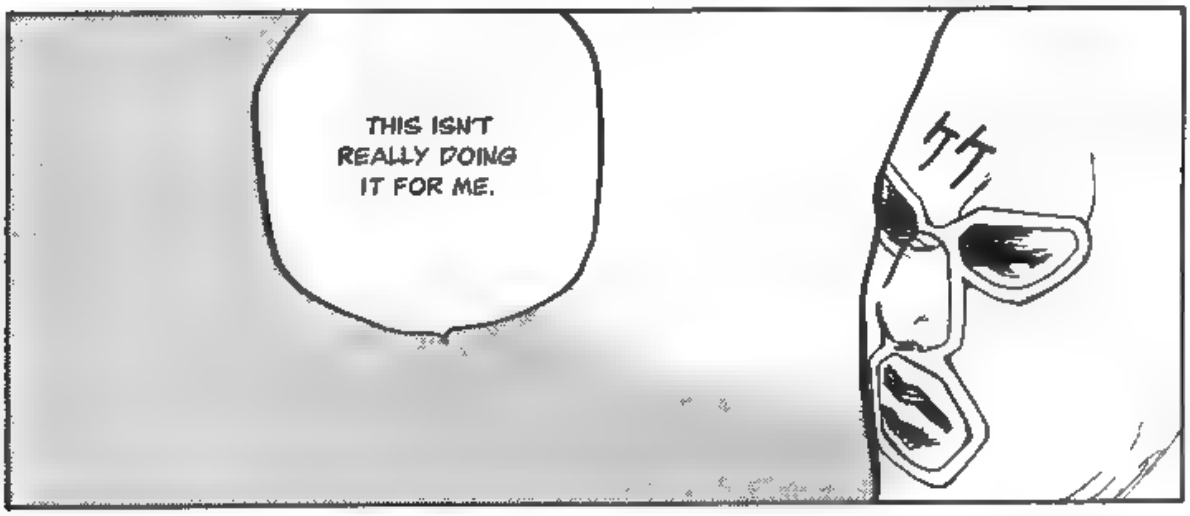
I SHOULD JUST GO HAVE SOME FUN.
I THINK I'LL FORGET ALL ABOUT THE MASK FOR A WHILE.

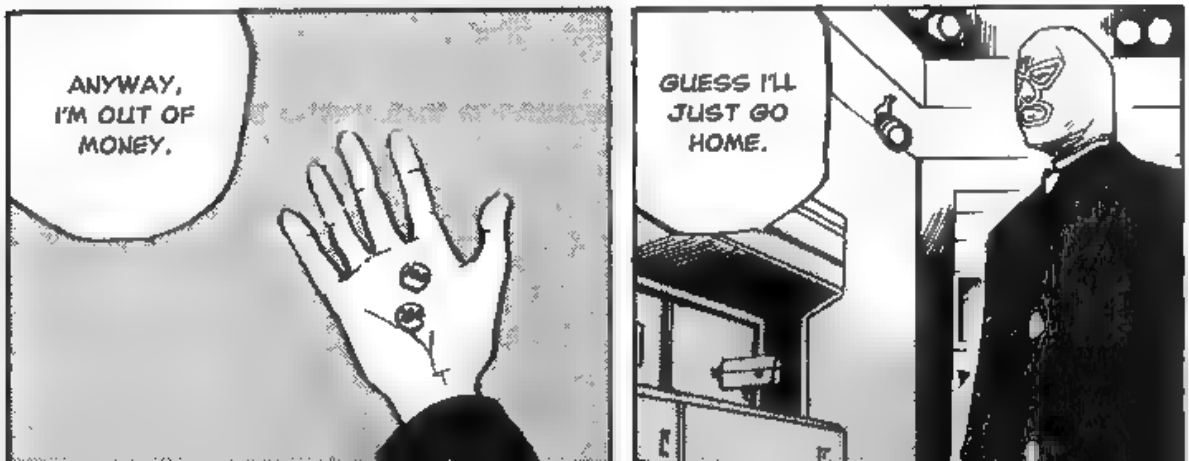

ZAP!
SKREEE
ZAP!
VWEEN

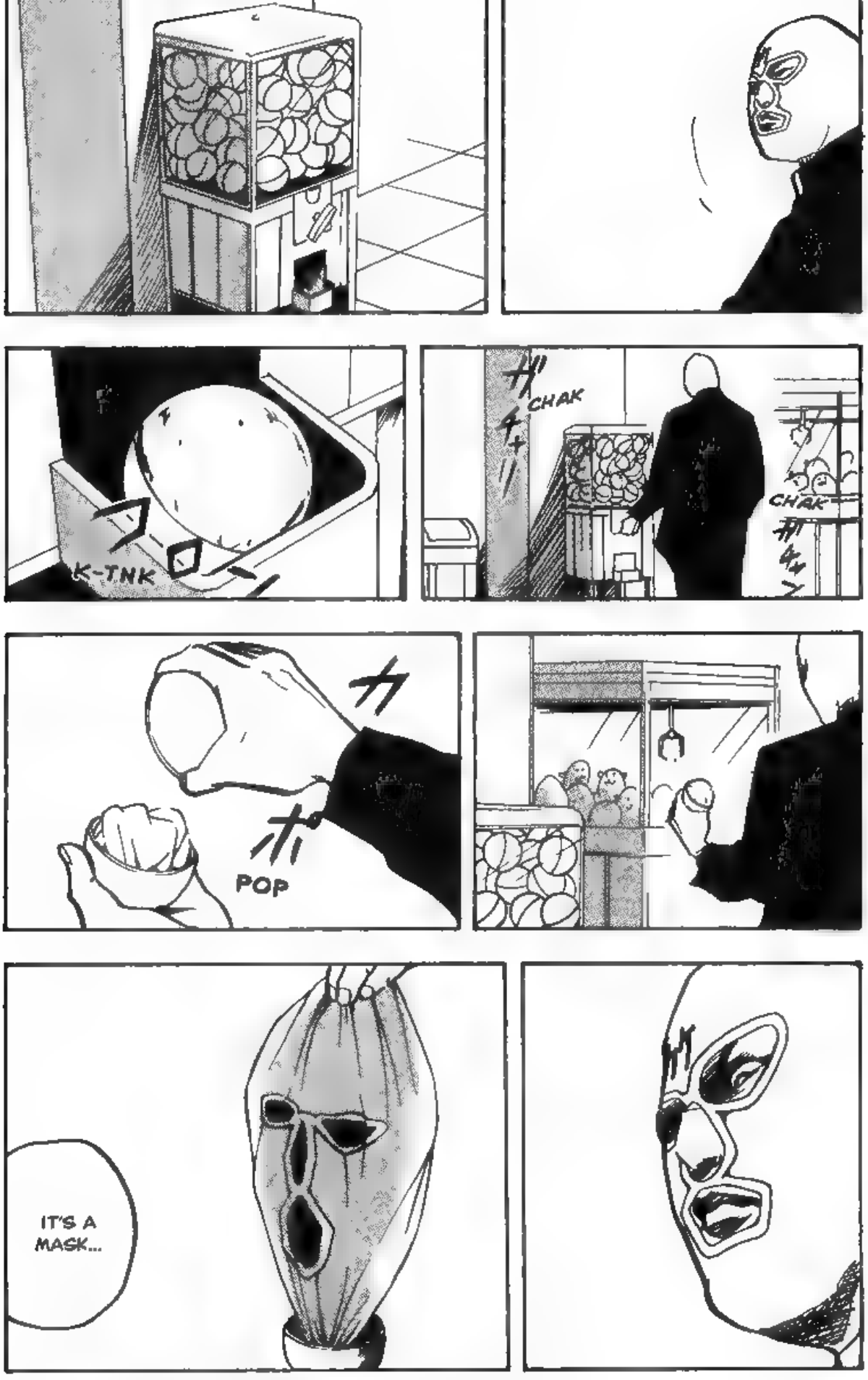

VRMMM
RACE


PING
K-CHAK
VRMMM


PING
K-CHAK

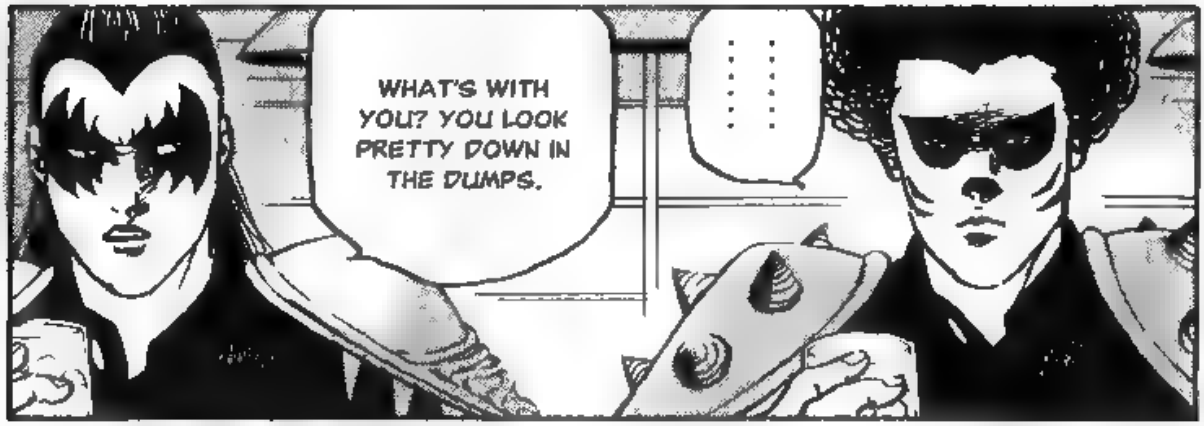

THIS ISN'T REALLY DOING IT FOR ME.
ケケ

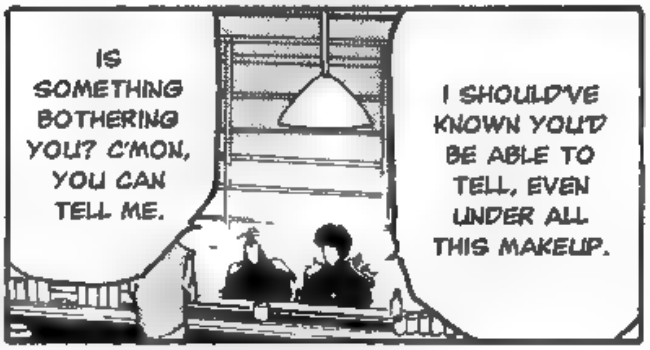

ANYWAY, I'M OUT OF MONEY.
GUESS I'LL JUST GO HOME.

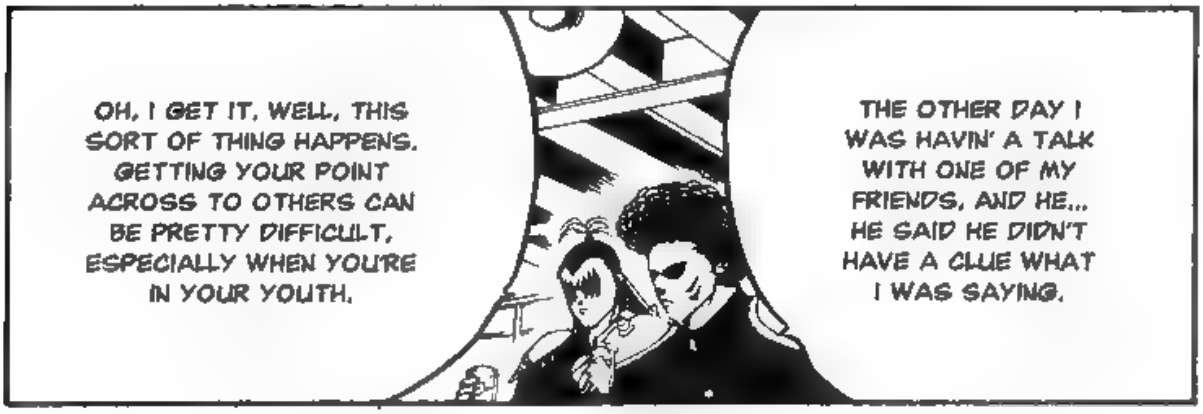


THE ANGST OF YOUTH IS A VICIOUS CYCLE INDEED.

CHAPTER 178: **SURE KNOW SOMETHING**



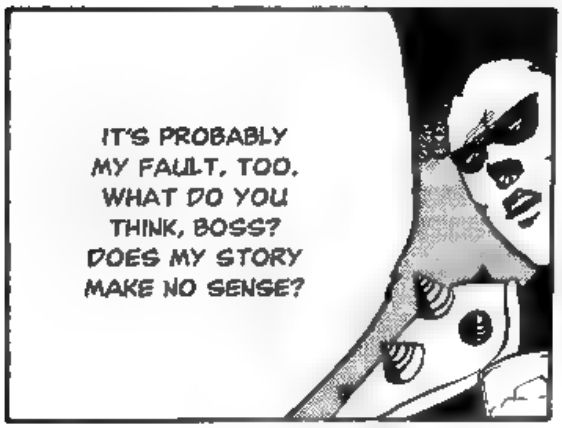



OH, I GET IT. WELL, THIS SORT OF THING HAPPENS. GETTING YOUR POINT ACROSS TO OTHERS CAN BE PRETTY DIFFICULT, ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU'RE IN YOUR YOUTH.
THE OTHER DAY I WAS HAVIN' A TALK WITH ONE OF MY FRIENDS, AND HE... HE SAID HE DIDN'T HAVE A CLUE WHAT I WAS SAYING.

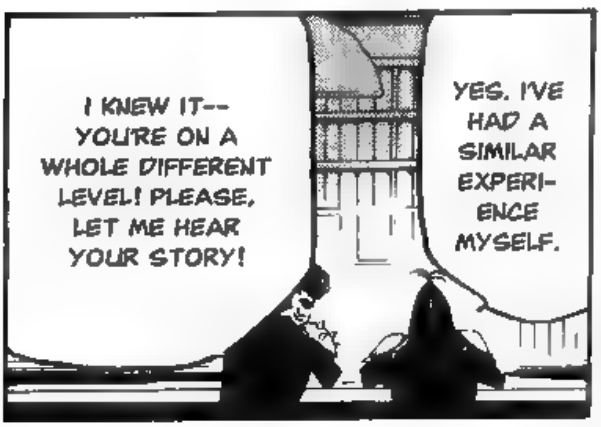
HMM. ALRIGHT, I'LL GIVE IT A SHOT. IT'S KINDA TRICKY, THOUGH, SO YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY ATTENTION.
STILL, I THINK I MIGHT BE ABLE TO KNOW WHERE YOU'RE COMING FROM. WHY DON'T YOU TRY HAVING THAT TALK WITH ME?

YOU'VE BEEN WALKING OUTSIDE WHEN YOU COME TO A BUNCH OF TILES ALL LAID OUT LIKE A GRID BEFORE, RIGHT?
EVERY ONCE IN A WHILE, SEEING THAT MAKES ME WANT TO MEASURE MY STEPS SO MY FEET ALWAYS STAY INSIDE THE LINES.
YEAH.
IT'S JUST SOMETHING I DO FOR MY OWN SATISFACTION. IT PROBABLY MAKES ME LOOK LIKE SOME KIND OF WEIRDO...
THE WHOLE THING'S PRETTY MEANINGLESS. I MEAN, EVEN IF I CLEAR IT WITHOUT STEPPING ON ANY OF THE LINES, IT'S NOT LIKE I'M GOING TO GET A REWARD OR ANYTHING.
INCIDENTALLY, WHEN I TOLD THIS TO MY FRIEND, HE SAID, "I AIN'T NEVER DONE SOMETHIN' THAT STUPID IN MY LIFE."
BUT I THINK EVERYONE'S DONE SOMETHING LIKE THIS AT LEAST ONCE.

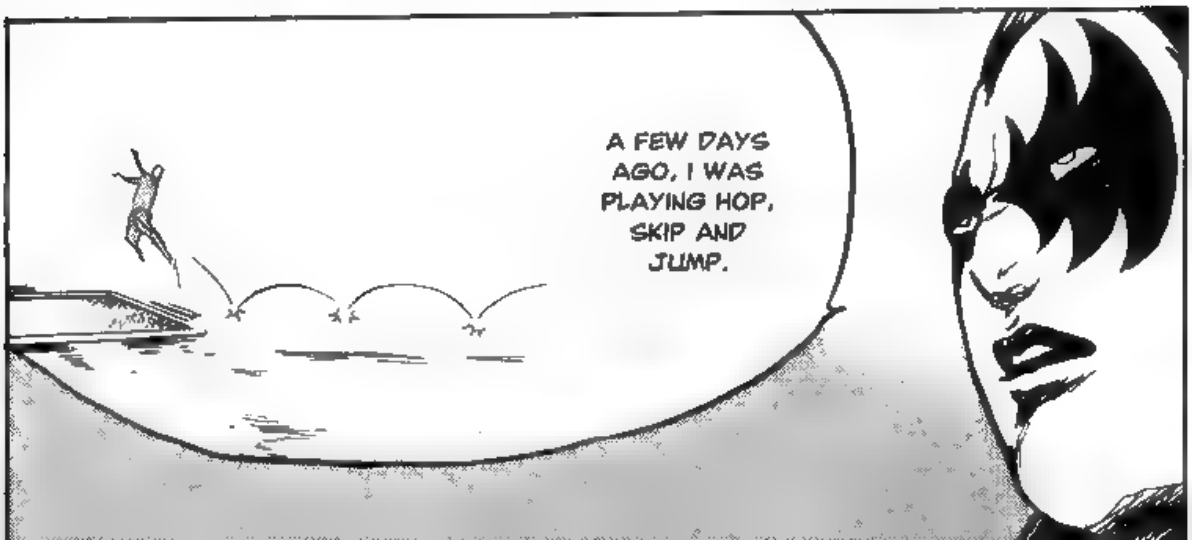
BUT HE WOULDN'T BACK DOWN. HE JUST SAID, "I AIN'T NEVER DONE THAT! HELL, THE ONLY ONE WHO DOES CRAP LIKE THAT IS YOU!" OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.
OF COURSE, I SHOT BACK WITH, "THERE'S NO WAY YOU'VE **NEVER** DONE SOMETHING LIKE IT! I BET YOU'VE DONE IT AT LEAST ONCE AND YOU'RE JUST TRYIN' TO ACT COOL."


IT'S PROBABLY MY FAULT, TOO. WHAT DO YOU THINK, BOSS? DOES MY STORY MAKE NO SENSE?

THIS INCIDENT HAS KINDA SOURED THINGS BETWEEN US. SINCE THEN, WE HAVEN'T REALLY GOTTEN ALONG.


I KNEW IT-- YOU'RE ON A WHOLE DIFFERENT LEVEL! PLEASE, LET ME HEAR YOUR STORY!
YES. I'VE HAD A SIMILAR EXPERI-ENCE MYSELF.

WHAT? YOU UNDERSTAND?!
NO, I UNDER-STAND PER-FECTLY.

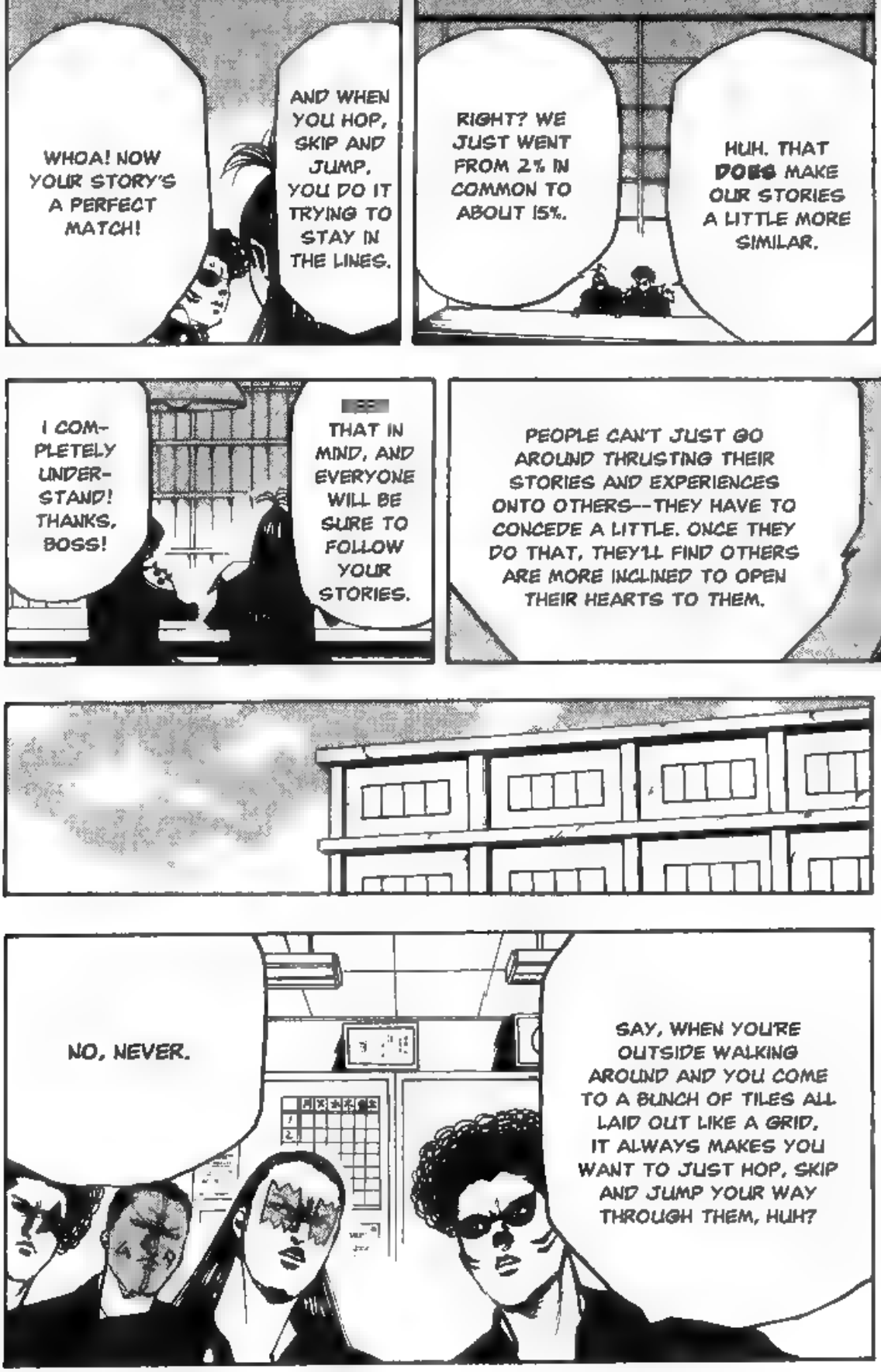

A FEW DAYS AGO, I WAS PLAYING HOP, SKIP AND JUMP.

WHEN JUMPING, MY FEET WOULD STRAY ACROSS THE LINE, OR BE TOO FAR AWAY FROM IT.
HOWEVER, THE LENGTH OF MY STRIDE WAS SOMEWHAT IRREGULAR.
I THOUGHT ABOUT IT LONG AND HARD, AND THEN IT HIT ME.
AS YOU CAN IMAGINE, THIS DEEPLY TROUBLED ME.
SO I TRIED STARTING OFF WITH THE LEFT ONE INSTEAD.
I WAS ALWAYS STARTING OFF WITH MY RIGHT FOOT.
I WAS ABLE TO JUMP WITH MY FEET RIGHT UP AGAINST THE LINE. THAT ONE TINY DIFFERENCE HAD A MAJOR IMPACT ON MY PERFORMANCE. I'D MADE AN IMPORTANT DISCOVERY.
ONCE I DID THAT, IT WAS PERFECT.

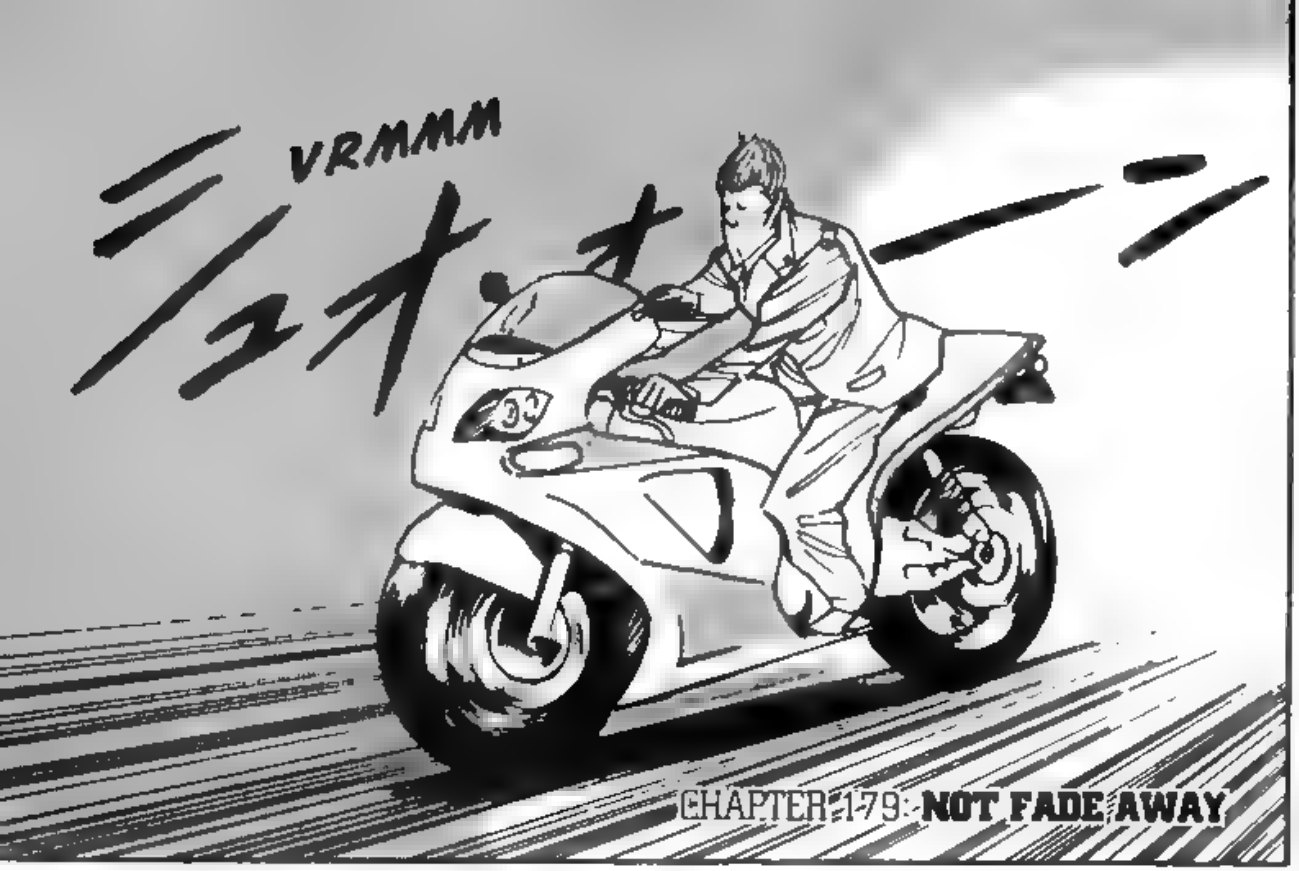
HUH?!
MY STORY'S PRETTY SIMILAR TO YOURS, RIGHT?
SO ESSENTIALLY...
. . . . . .
I THOUGHT SO. AAH, I'M HAPPY TO HAVE BEEN THE ONE WHO UNDERSTANDS! ANYWAY, THE IMPORTANT THING NOW IS THAT YOU HAVE SOMEONE WHO GETS YOU. COME ON, CHEER UP!
UH, Y-YES! YES, IT IS!

I'VE GOT SOMETHIN' I NEED TO TELL YOU. IT'S KIND OF DIFFICULT TO SAY THIS, BUT...AFTER WE TALKED YESTERDAY, I WENT HOME AND THOUGHT ABOUT IT ALL NIGHT.
HM?
SAY, BOSS?
THE NEXT DAY
YOU THINK SO? SURE, A FEW OF THE DETAILS MAY HAVE DIFFERED, BUT THEY WERE BASICALLY THE SAME.
AND I THINK THAT STORY YOU TOLD ME YESTERDAY HAD NOTHING AT ALL TO DO WITH MINE!
HMM. ALMOST, BUT NOT QUITE, COMPLETELY DIFFERENT, EH?
I REALLY AM SORRY, BUT I DON'T THINK IT'S A MATTER OF A FEW DETAILS. I THINK THEY WERE ALMOST, BUT NOT QUITE, COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM EACH OTHER!
THEN THAT MEANS THEY'RE ALIKE IN THE REMAINING 2%.
UM, SOMEWHERE AROUND THERE. PERSONALLY, I'D SAY SOMETHING LIKE 98%.
SO THAT'S NOT TO SAY THEY WERE FULLY 100% DIFFERENT. WHAT DO YOU THINK THEN? 99%?

STILL, 2% SEEMS A LITTLE LOW. ISN'T THERE A WAY TO GET THAT NUMBER ANY HIGHER?
LOOK, YOU AND I WERE RAISED IN COMPLETELY DIFFERENT ENVIRONMENTS. WE'VE GOT DIFFERENT IDEALS AND OUTLOOKS ON LIFE. WE'RE ABOUT AS UNALIKE AS YOU CAN GET! SO FOR TWO PEOPLE LIKE THAT TO HAVE EVEN 2% IN COMMON...I'D SAY THAT'S PRETTY INCREDIBLE. WOULDN'T YOU?
UH, MAYBE.
I MEAN, YOU HAVE TO CHANGE YOUR STORY TO MAKE IT CLOSER TO MINE.
HUH? WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "CONCEDE"?
ALRIGHT, HERE'S WHAT WE DO-- YOU HAVE TO CONCEDE A LITTLE.
HUH?!
BASICALLY, YOU HAVE TO INCORPORATE HOPPING, SKIPPING AND JUMPING INTO YOUR STORY.
WELL... WHAT DO I HAVE TO DO?
YOU WERE THE ONE THAT CAME TO ME WITH THIS PROBLEM, SO IT ONLY MAKES SENSE THAT YOU CONCEDE, YES?
"WHENEVER I'M OUT WALKING OUTSIDE AND I COME TO A BUNCH OF TILES ALL LAID OUT LIKE A GRID, IT MAKES ME WANT TO HOP, SKIP AND JUMP."
YOU HAVE TO ALTER YOUR STORY A BIT, LIKE THIS:


WHOA! NOW YOUR STORY'S A PERFECT MATCH!
AND WHEN YOU HOP, SKIP AND JUMP, YOU DO IT TRYING TO STAY IN THE LINES.
RIGHT? WE JUST WENT FROM 2% IN COMMON TO ABOUT 15%.
HUH. THAT DOES MAKE OUR STORIES A LITTLE MORE SIMILAR.
I COMPLETELY UNDERSTAND! THANKS, BOSS!
THAT IN MIND, AND EVERYONE WILL BE SURE TO FOLLOW YOUR STORIES.
PEOPLE CAN'T JUST GO AROUND THRUSTING THEIR STORIES AND EXPERIENCES ONTO OTHERS--THEY HAVE TO CONCEDE A LITTLE. ONCE THEY DO THAT, THEY'LL FIND OTHERS ARE MORE INCLINED TO OPEN THEIR HEARTS TO THEM.
NO, NEVER.
SAY, WHEN YOU'RE OUTSIDE WALKING AROUND AND YOU COME TO A BUNCH OF TILES ALL LAID OUT LIKE A GRID, IT ALWAYS MAKES YOU WANT TO JUST HOP, SKIP AND JUMP YOUR WAY THROUGH THEM, HUH?

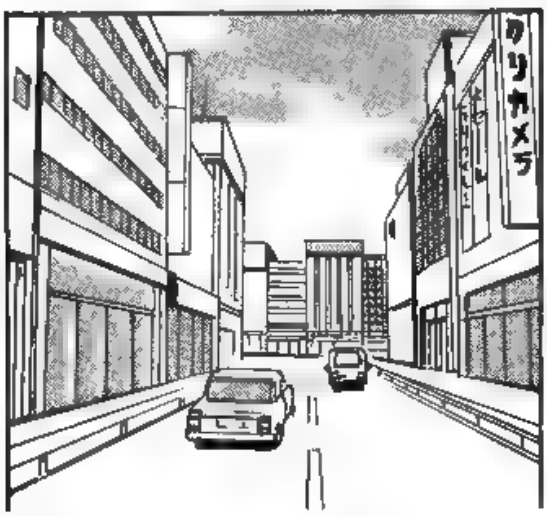
IT'S PROBABLY MORE LIKE 30%.



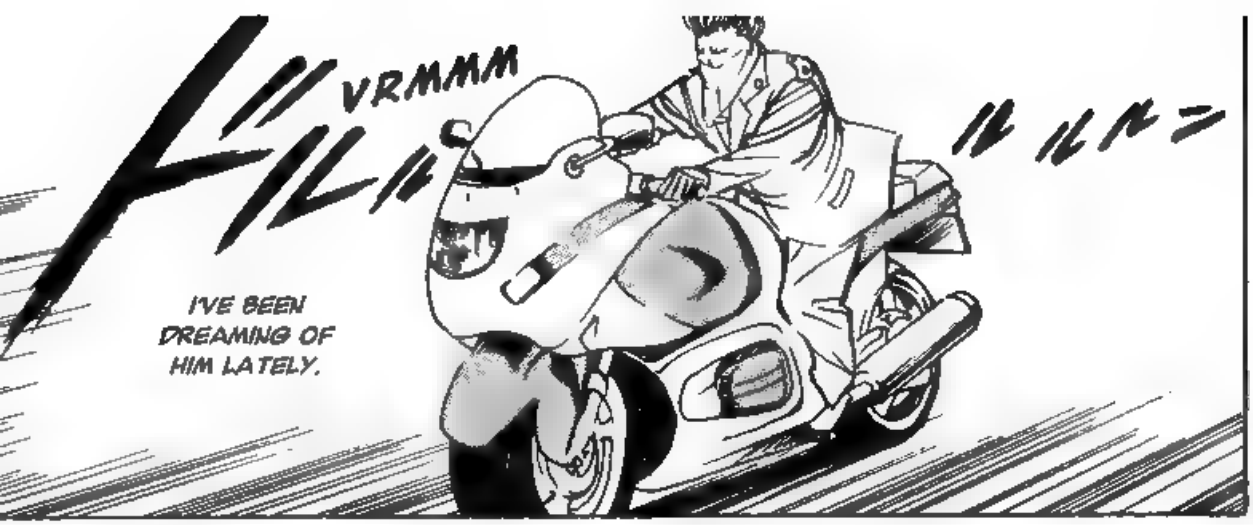
CHAPTER 179: **NOT FADE AWAY**

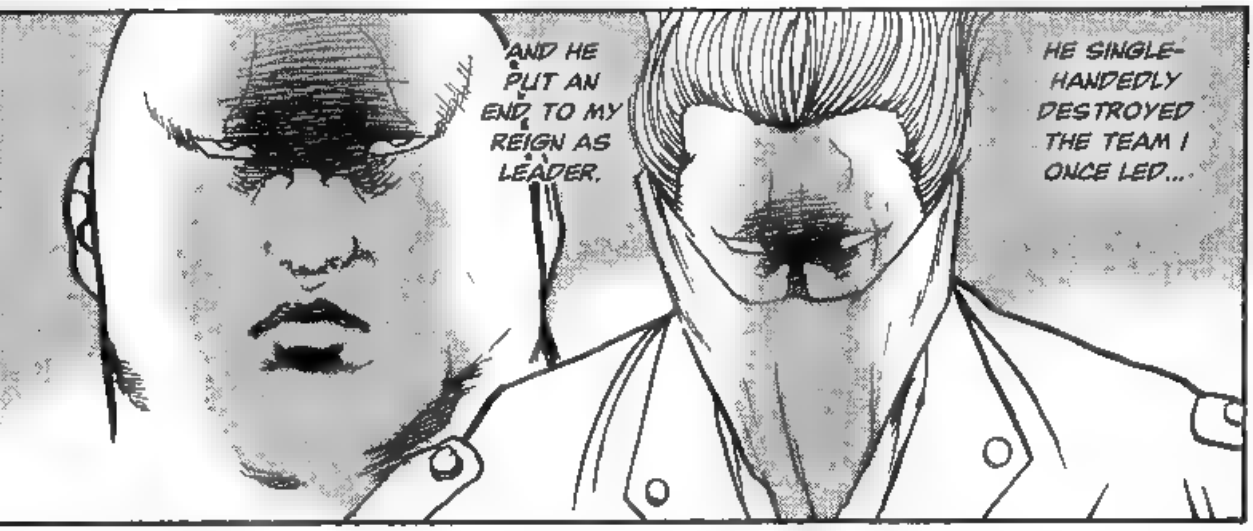
WHAT?!
CHING
CHING

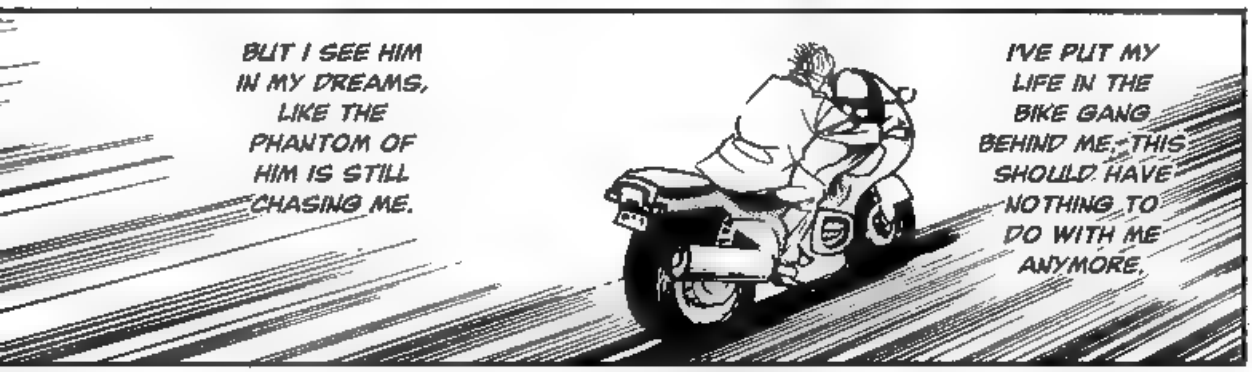
AAGH!
BWSH

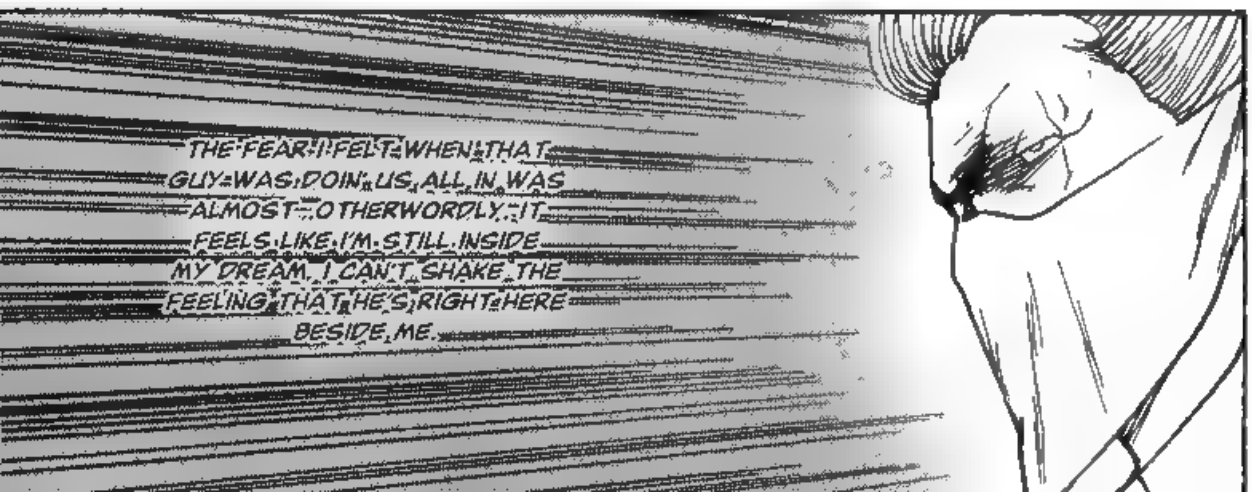

カリカメラ

JUST A DREAM...

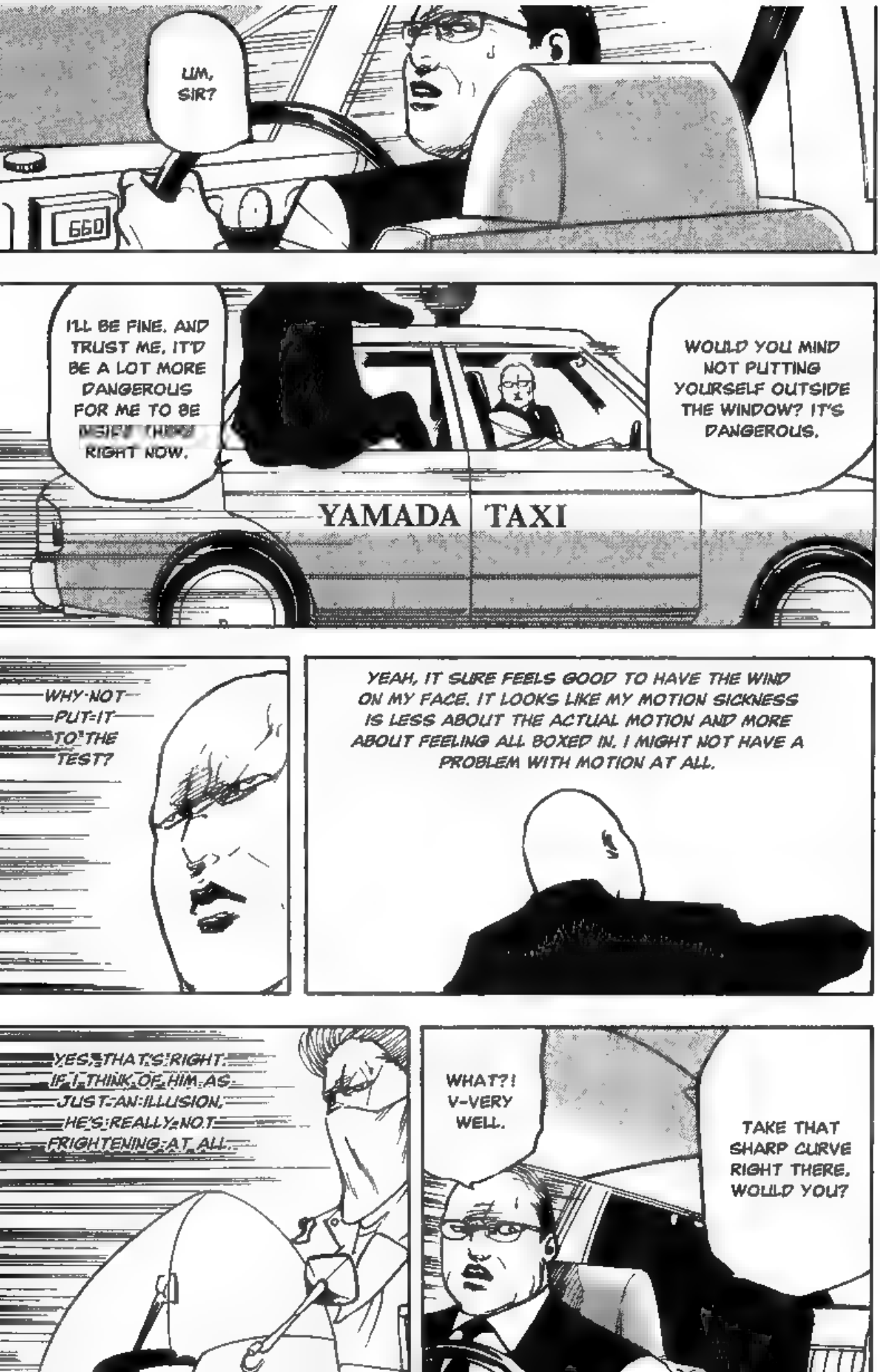

VRMMM
I'VE BEEN DREAMING OF HIM LATELY.


AND HE PUT AN END TO MY REIGN AS LEADER.
HE SINGLE-HANDEDLY DESTROYED THE TEAM I ONCE LED...


BUT I SEE HIM IN MY DREAMS, LIKE THE PHANTOM OF HIM IS STILL CHASING ME.
I'VE PUT MY LIFE IN THE BIKE GANG BEHIND ME. THIS SHOULD HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH ME ANYMORE.


THE FEAR I FELT WHEN THAT GUY WAS DOIN' US ALL IN WAS ALMOST OTHERWORDLY. IT FEELS LIKE I'M STILL INSIDE MY DREAM. I CAN'T SHAKE THE FEELING THAT HE'S RIGHT HERE BESIDE ME.

WHAT?!
VRMMM
YAMADA TAXI
BUT I'M LOOKING RIGHT AT HIM! I CAN SEE HIS BALD ASS HANGING OUT THE WINDOW OF A TAXI!
IS THIS ANOTHER ILLUSION?
NO, HE CAN'T BE REAL. IT'S AN ILLUSION! THERE'S NO WAY SOME BALD GUY WHO HANGS OUT THE WINDOWS OF TAXIS COULD EXIST IN THIS WORLD!
VRMMM


UM, SIR?
660
I'LL BE FINE. AND TRUST ME, IT'D BE A LOT MORE DANGEROUS FOR ME TO BE INSIDE THERE RIGHT NOW.
WOULD YOU MIND NOT PUTTING YOURSELF OUTSIDE THE WINDOW? IT'S DANGEROUS.
YAMADA TAXI
WHY NOT PUT IT TO THE TEST?
YEAH, IT SURE FEELS GOOD TO HAVE THE WIND ON MY FACE. IT LOOKS LIKE MY MOTION SICKNESS IS LESS ABOUT THE ACTUAL MOTION AND MORE ABOUT FEELING ALL BOXED IN. I MIGHT NOT HAVE A PROBLEM WITH MOTION AT ALL.
YES, THAT'S RIGHT. IF I THINK OF HIM AS JUST AN ILLUSION, HE'S REALLY NOT FRIGHTENING AT ALL.
WHAT?! V-VERY WELL.
TAKE THAT SHARP CURVE RIGHT THERE, WOULD YOU?

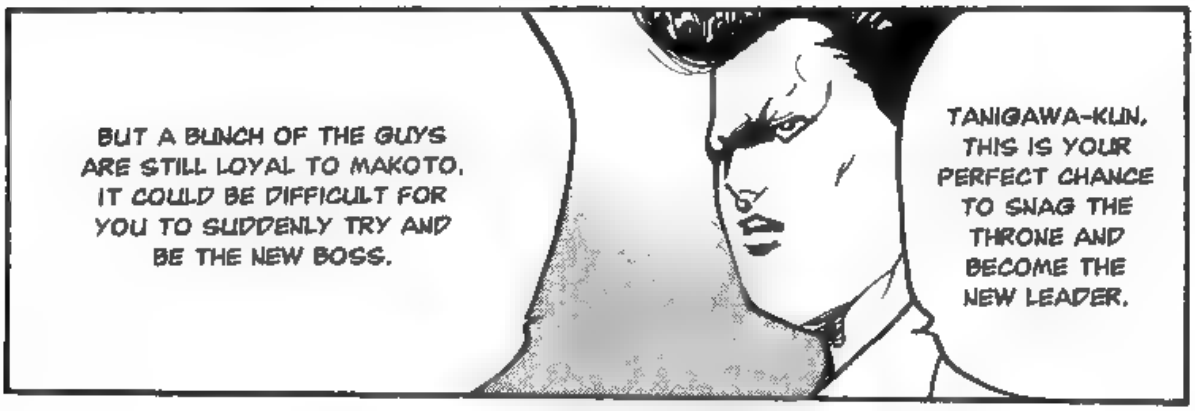
WHOA!
SKREEEE
IF I CAN'T BEAT THAT THING, I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO MOVE FORWARD!
FINE! I ACCEPT ITS CHALLENGE!
THAT DAMN PHANTOM IS FOLLOWING ME!
WHAAT?!
HEY, SUDDENLY STEP ON THE BRAKES FOR ME.
URP...YEAH, I FELT THAT. BUT I CAN'T LET SOMETHING LIKE THIS HOLD ME BACK. I'VE TAKEN MY FIRST STEP.
JUST IMAGINE A CAT OR SOMETHING RAN ACROSS THE ROAD AND YOU GOTTA BRAKE.
VRMMM
THE BRAKES? BUT WHY...

SKREEEE
JUST DO IT!
VRMMM
BUT THERE'S A BIKE RIGHT BEHIND US...
ADA TAXI
SKRKKKK
I FEEL TERRIBLE
URP..
SKRASSH
YAMADA TAXI
IT'S ALL OVER FOR ME NOW.
I LOST TO A PHANTOM.
HHHGH

I'VE STILL GOT SOME OF THE OLD LUCK LEFT.
IT'S NOT THE END OF ME YET.
AN AMBULANCE! PERFECT TIMING!
ピーポー
VWOOO
ピーポー
VWOOO
SKREE
I JUST FLIPPED MY BIKE OVER. L-LET ME IN THERE.
UM, WHO ARE YOU?
I'M SAVED!
WHAT?!
I feel terrible..
I'M SORRY, BUT THIS PERSON IS AHEAD OF YOU.
HOW THE HELL LONG IS THIS GUY GONNA HAVE IT IN FOR ME?!

SEEMS FINE TO ME.

CHAPTER 180: **DANCING IN THE STREET**

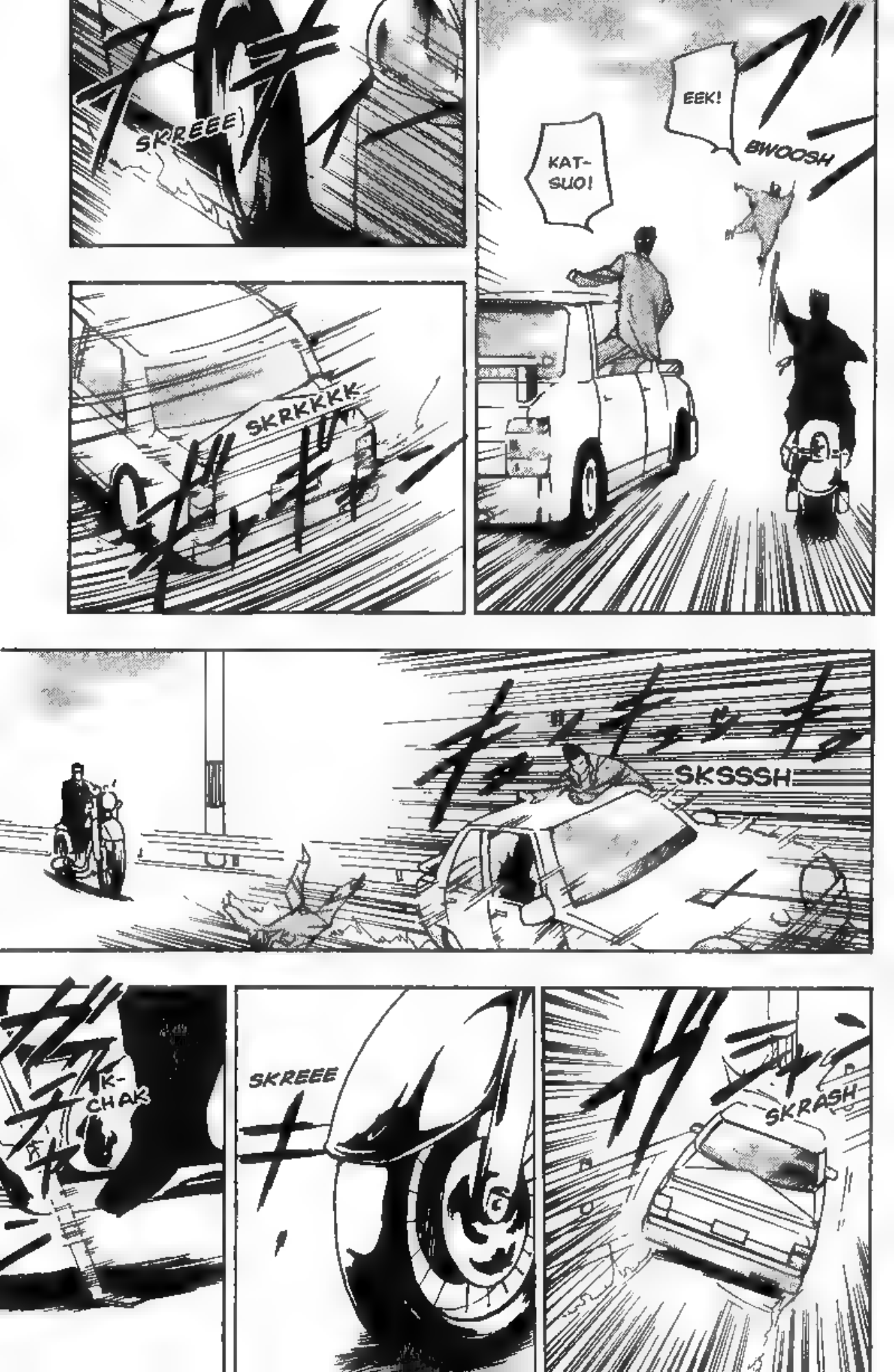

BUT A BUNCH OF THE GUYS ARE STILL LOYAL TO MAKOTO. IT COULD BE DIFFICULT FOR YOU TO SUDDENLY TRY AND BE THE NEW BOSS.
TANIGAWA-KUN, THIS IS YOUR PERFECT CHANCE TO SNAG THE THRONE AND BECOME THE NEW LEADER.

HEH. THERE'S NOTHING TO IT, REALLY. ALL I HAVE TO DO IS CRUSH THE SON OF A BITCH WHO MADE MAKOTO QUIT! IF I DO THAT, THE OTHERS WILL RALLY AROUND ME FOR SURE.
Y-YOU DO?!

HUH?! AN ASSASSIN?
WH-WHO?
THERE'S NO NEED FOR ME TO DO IT PERSONALLY-- I'VE ALREADY SENT AN ASSASSIN TO DO IT FOR ME!
STILL, THAT GUY BEAT UP OUR ENTIRE GANG! HOW ARE YOU GONNA "CRUSH" HIM?
THE ONLY ONE WHO COULD TAKE CARE OF THAT BALD BASTARD ONCE AND FOR ALL. THE MAN THAT EVERYONE FEARS...THE STRONGEST OF THEM ALL! YOU KNOW--HIM!
VRMMM
K''
K''
K''

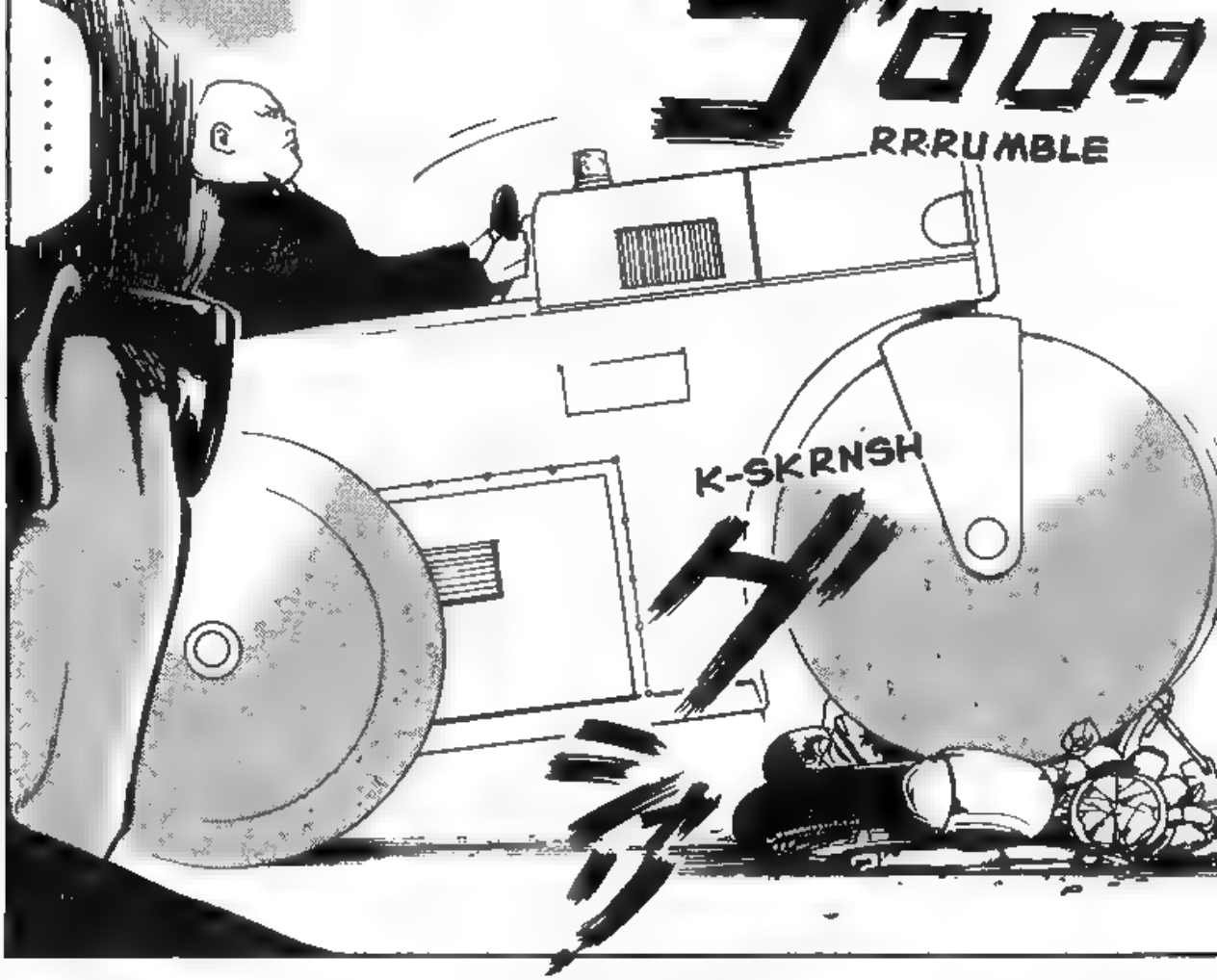
. . . .
HEY! HEY, DAMMIT!
GET A MOVE ON OR WE'LL RUN YOUR ASS OVER!
WHAT THE HELL DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOIN', OLD MAN?!

VRMMM
YOU GOT SOME BALLS, OLD MAN!
BA- BA- BAA- BA!
OH, YOU WANT SOME OF THIS?!
SKRASSH
WAAGH!
HUH?!
YANK
YANK
HNGH!

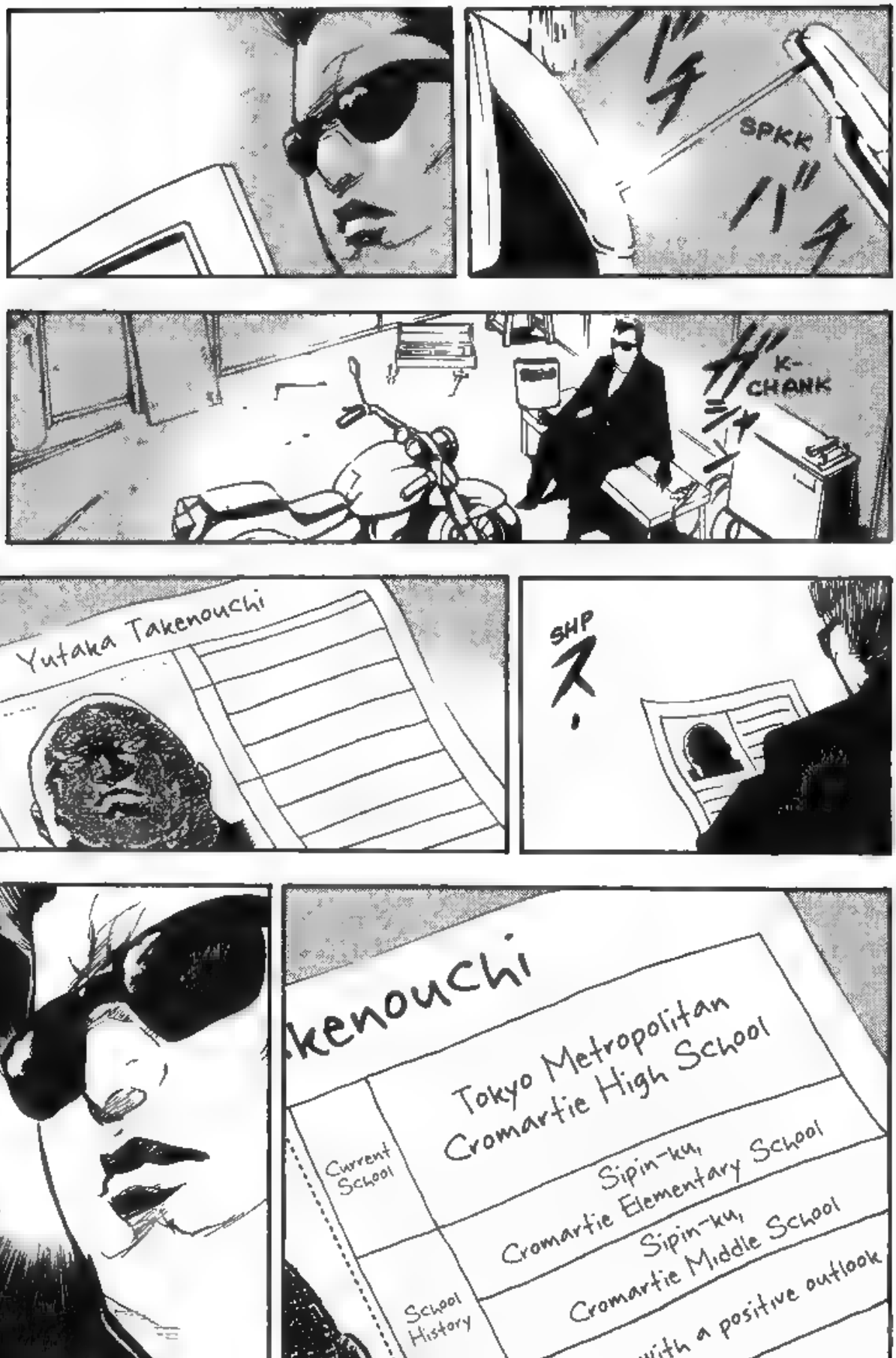

SKREEE!
EEK!
BWOOSH
KAT-SUO!
SKRKKKK-
SKSSSH
K-CHAK
SKREEE
SKRASH

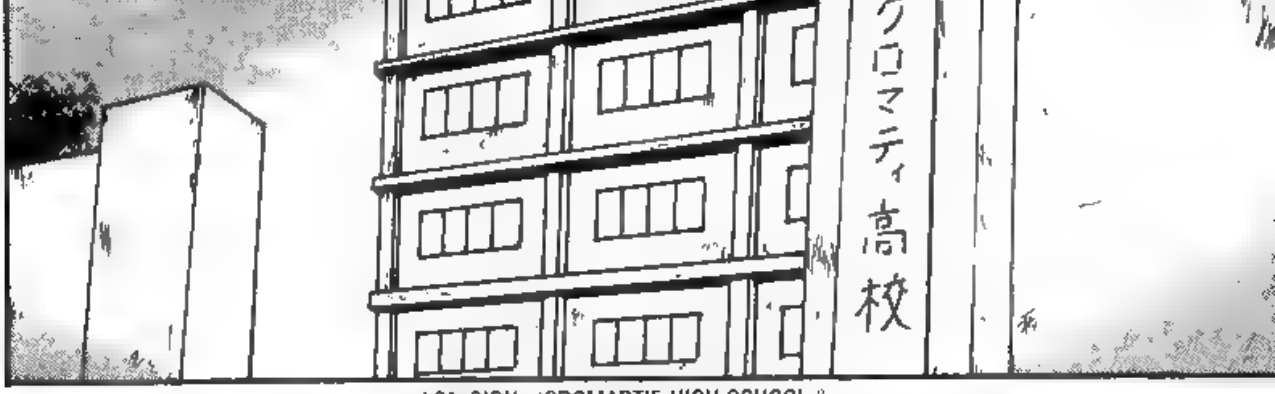
WHO IS THIS GUY?!
PSSH
NNGH
SKFF
SKFF
AAGH!
SHP
O-OK, MAN! I GET IT! I'M SORRY!
AAGH!
BWSH
HUH?!
SHP

WHAT'S WITH THE PHOTO? ARE YOU LOOKIN' FOR THAT GUY OR SOMETHING?
HE'S PROBABLY RIDIN' AROUND SOMEWHERE RIGHT NOW. HE'S ONE FEARSOME DUDE! THEY SAY THAT WHEREVER HE GOES, HE LEAVES A PILE OF BODIES BEHIND HIM.
I-I'VE SEEN HIM A COUPLE TIMES. HE LIKES TO RACE THE MOUNTAIN ROAD.
BSH
OOMPH!
JINGLE
SKRNCH

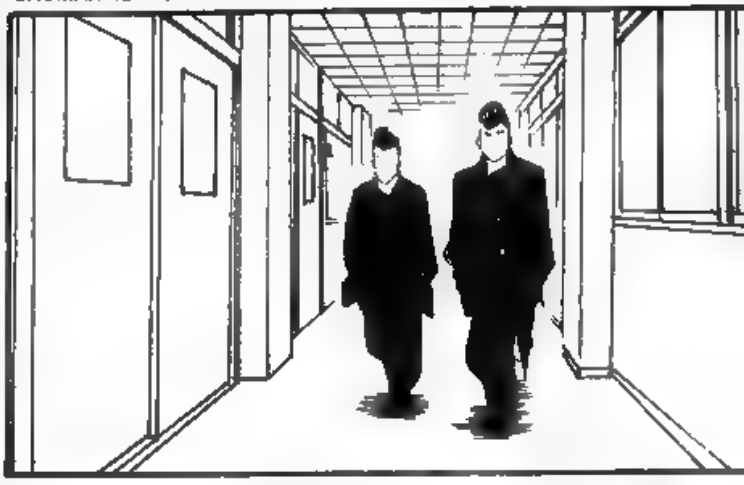


WAY TO GO, TAKENOUCHI!


SPKK
K-
CHANK
Yutaka Takenouchi
SHP
kenouchi
Tokyo Metropolitan
Cromartie High School
Current School
Sipin-ku,
Cromartie Elementary School
Sipin-ku,
Cromartie Middle School
School History
with a positive outlook



*ON SIGN "CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL"



YOU COME HERE TRYING TO START SOMETHIN'? YOU GOT A LOT OF NERVE, OLD MAN!
WHO THE HELL ARE YOU?! THIS AIN'T NO PLACE FOR OUTSIDERS, CHUMP!
WELL?! SAY SOMETHING, DAMMIT!
BWOOSH
GRAB
HM?
HA HA HA!
THAT DAMN FOOL!
HUH?!
YANK

WHOA!
KER-
S'MASSH

THMP
THMP
THMP

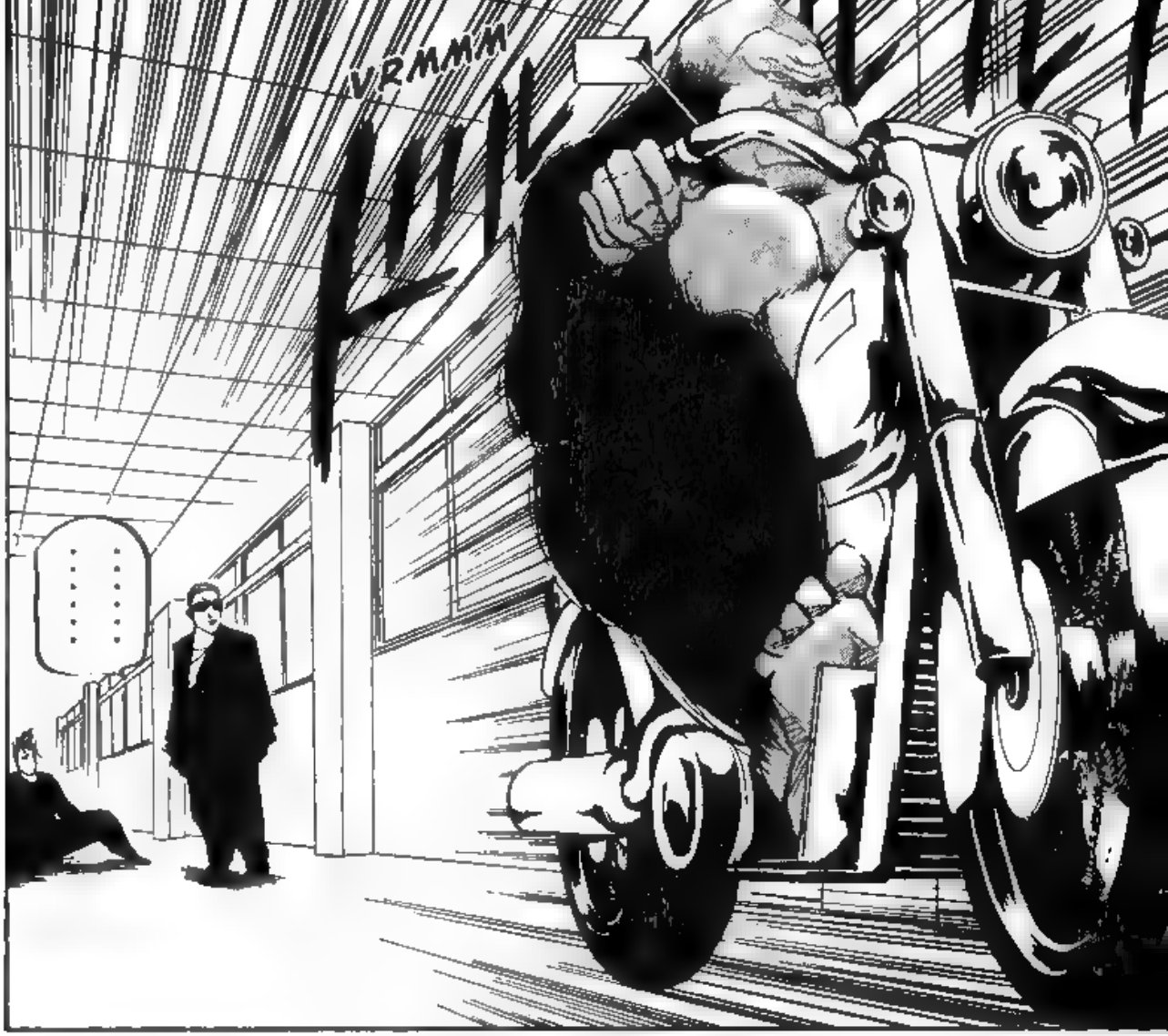
WHAT'S GOIN' ON?!
WHAT THE HELL HAP-PENED?
HNNG

HE'S GOT SOME BRASS ONES THINKIN' HE CAN DO THAT AT CROMARTIE!
LOOKS LIKE SOME LITTLE PUNK'S COME HERE LOOKIN' FOR TROUBLE.

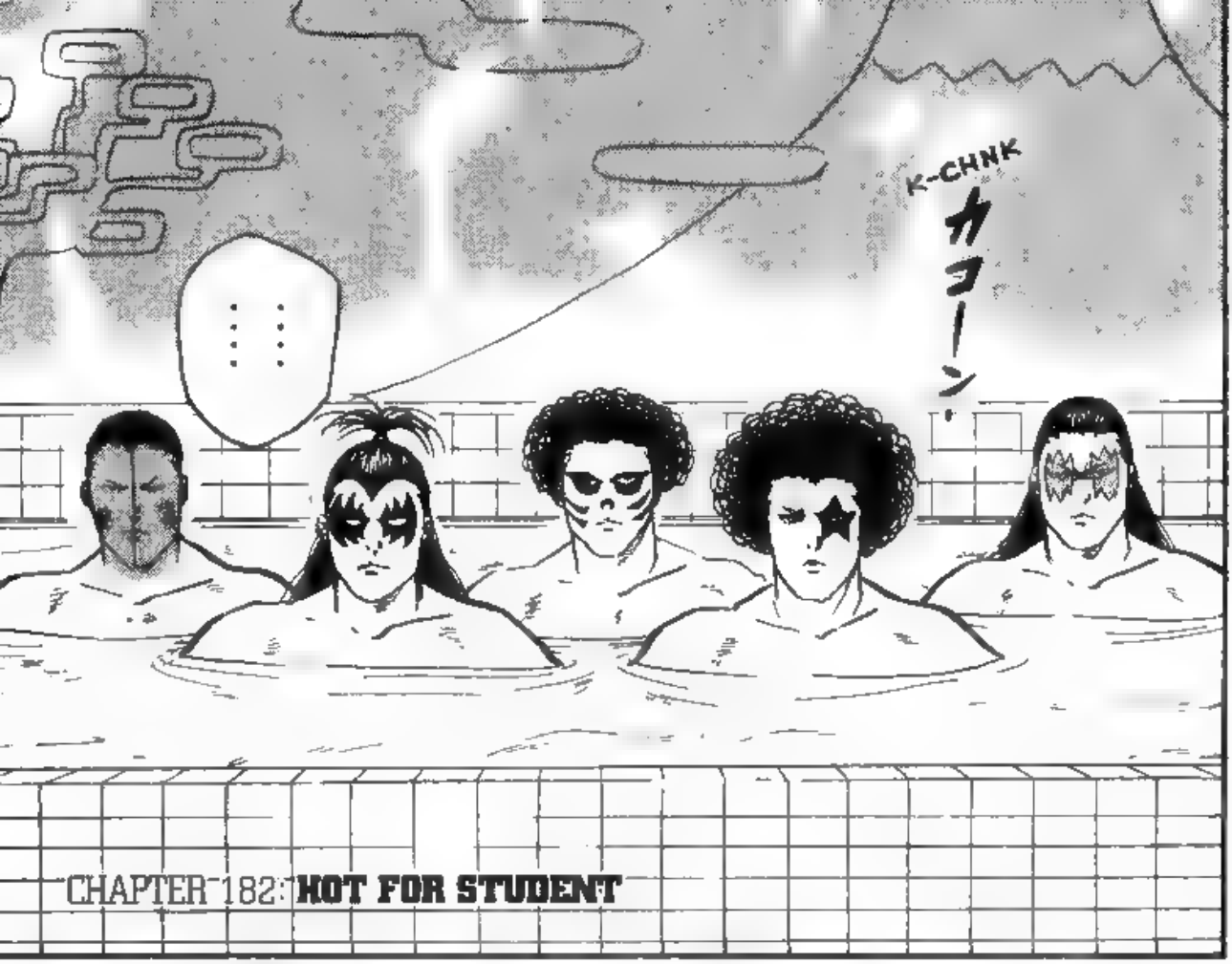
HUH?!
I-IS THAT HIM?
WE GOTTA TEACH HIM WHO HE'S MESSIN' WITH!
WHERE IS THIS IDIOT?
YOU GOTTA BE KIDDIN' ME!
VRMMM
THOK
BLGH!
SKRKK
SKREEE
TET-SUO!
GRG
THWOMP

GAH!
VMMM
SKREEE
EEK!
FLOP
PSSHHH
CHK
KR
CHAK

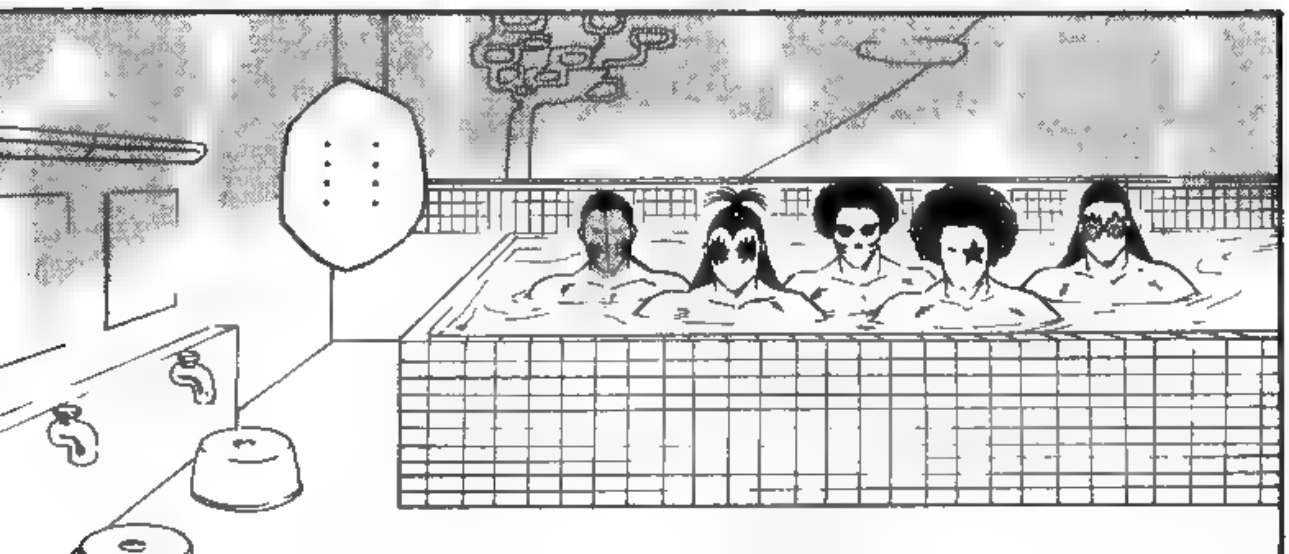
HUH?!
SHP
EEK!
WINCE
YOU'RE LOOKIN' FOR TAKENOUCHI? H-HE HASN'T BEEN COMIN' TO SCHOOL LATELY. I HEAR HE'S RIDING OUT AT THE PASS EVERY DAY.
IF YOU WANT TO FIND HIM, YOU SHOULD JUST GO THERE! YOU'RE WASTIN' YOUR TIME LOOKING FOR HIM HERE. I'M SERIOUS!
SWSH
BWSH



YEAH, YOU SHOULD'VE LOCKED THAT THING UP.

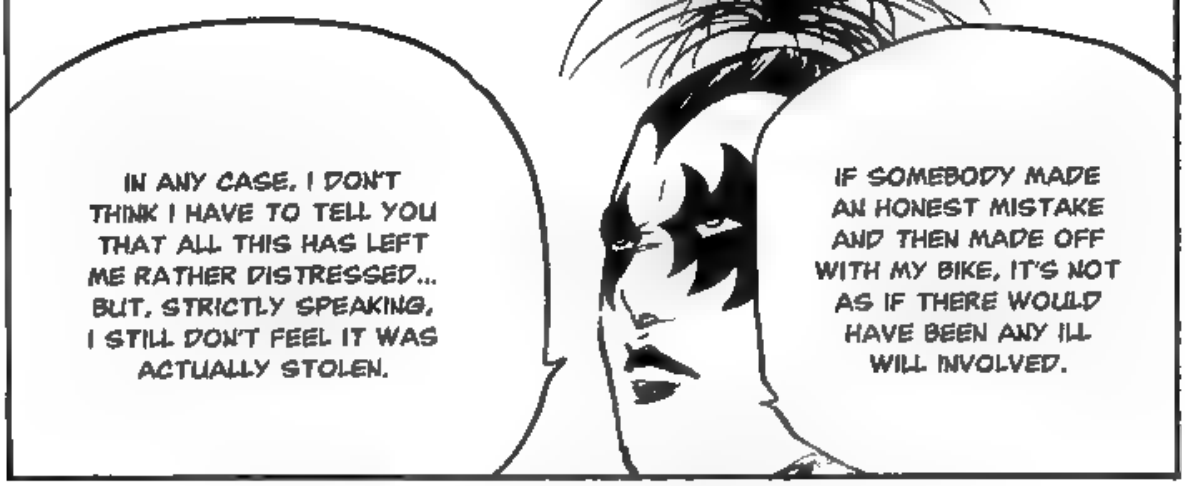


*ON FACE "HOT WATER."



THE OTHER DAY I PARKED MY BIKE IN FRONT OF THE STATION, AND WHEN I CAME BACK IT WAS GONE.
YES?
TO TURN TO A COMPLETELY DIFFERENT SUBJECT FOR A MOMENT...
THEN I STARTED THINKING THAT MAYBE I'D PARKED IT AT THE NEXT STATION OVER...BUT IT WASN'T THERE EITHER. THE HUMAN MEMORY SURE CAN BE FUZZY SOMETIMES, HUH?
I COULD'VE SWORN I'D PARKED IT BY THE NORTH ENTRANCE, BUT WHEN IT WASN'T THERE, I STARTED THINKING THAT MAYBE I WAS MISTAKEN AND I'D PARKED IT BY THE SOUTH ENTRANCE. BUT IT WASN'T THERE EITHER.
FOR REAL?
UH, BOSS?
.....
SOMETHING AS MYSTERIOUS AS THIS, THERE'S NO WAY ANYONE WOULD THINK IT HAD BEEN STOLEN. NO, THEY'D DEFINITELY FEEL LIKE THEY'D FORGOTTEN WHERE THEY'D PARKED IT.
DIDN'T IT OCCUR TO YOU THAT YOUR BIKE COULD HAVE BEEN STOLEN?

PUT SIMPLY, IT'S THE SORT OF REASONING THAT GOES, "THERE'S NO WAY MY BIKE COULD HAVE BEEN STOLEN. I MEAN, OUT OF ALL THESE OTHER BIKES LINED UP NEXT TO IT, THEY'D TAKE MINE?" IT'S A LOT LIKE THE THINKING THAT EVEN IF THERE WERE SOME GREAT CALAMITY, THERE'S NO WAY ANYTHING WOULD HAPPEN TO **YOU**.
I THINK I CAN UNDERSTAND WHERE YOU'RE COMING FROM, THOUGH.
IT WOULD TAKE SOMEONE WHO'S ACTUALLY BEEN THROUGH THIS TO UNDER-STAND THE PSYCHOLOGY.
YOU JUST DON'T KNOW WHEN TO QUIT, DO YOU, BOSS?
THAT'S RIGHT.
WHAT?! YOU'RE STILL NOT CONVINCED?
I'M TELLING YOU, I DON'T THINK IT WAS STOLEN.
YEAH, BUT THAT'S HOW YOU FEEL WHEN SOMETHING OF YOURS GETS STOLEN.
NO.
SO WAS IT IN THE DEPOS-ITORY?
OH, LIKE HOW IT CAN GET MOVED TO A DEPOSITORY OR SOME-THING IF YOU PARK IT IN A RESTRICTED AREA.
THERE'S ANOTHER OPTION TO CONSIDER HERE--THAT IT WAS SIMPLY REMOVED BY STATION PERSONNEL.
HUH?
THERE'S STILL THE POSSIBILITY THAT SOMEBODY MISTOOK IT FOR THEIR OWN AND ACCIDENTALLY RODE OFF WITH IT.
NOT YET.
WELL, IT LOOKS LIKE YOU'LL HAVE TO ACCEPT THAT IT WAS STOLEN.

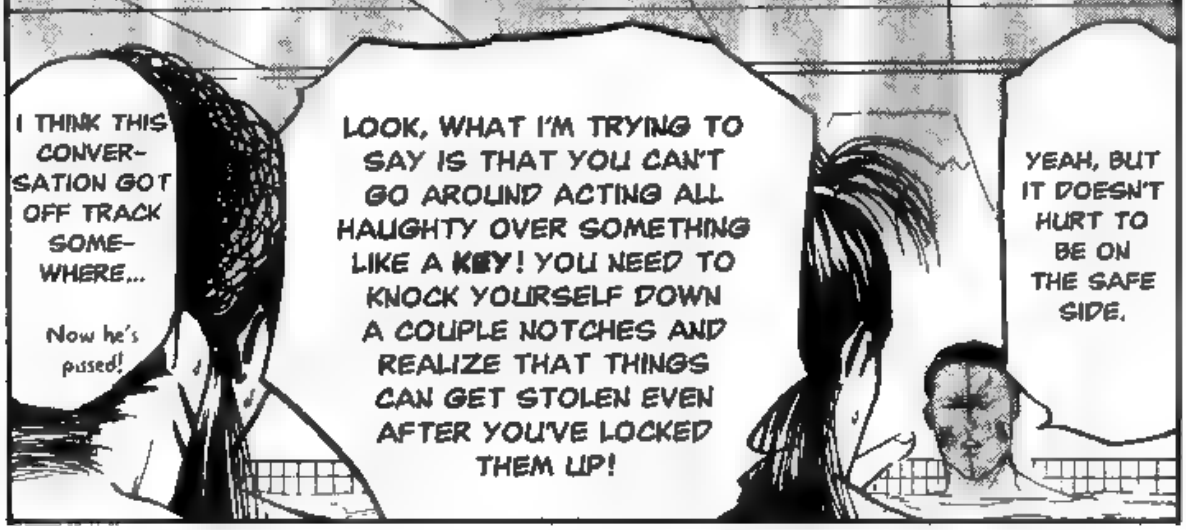

IN ANY CASE, I DON'T THINK I HAVE TO TELL YOU THAT ALL THIS HAS LEFT ME RATHER DISTRESSED... BUT, STRICTLY SPEAKING, I STILL DON'T FEEL IT WAS ACTUALLY STOLEN.
IF SOMEBODY MADE AN HONEST MISTAKE AND THEN MADE OFF WITH MY BIKE, IT'S NOT AS IF THERE WOULD HAVE BEEN ANY ILL WILL INVOLVED.

BUT ACCIDENTALLY GETTING ON SOMEONE ELSE'S BIKE AND RIDING OFF WITH IT? THAT JUST DOESN'T HAPPEN. I MEAN, YOU HAD IT LOCKED UP, RIGHT?
LOOK, IT'S ONE THING IF YOU'RE AT A TRADITIONAL TAVERN OR SOMEPLACE WHERE THEY MAKE YOU TAKE YOUR SHOES OFF, AND WHEN YOU'RE LEAVING YOU ACCIDENTALLY PUT ON SOMEBODY ELSE'S SHOES...

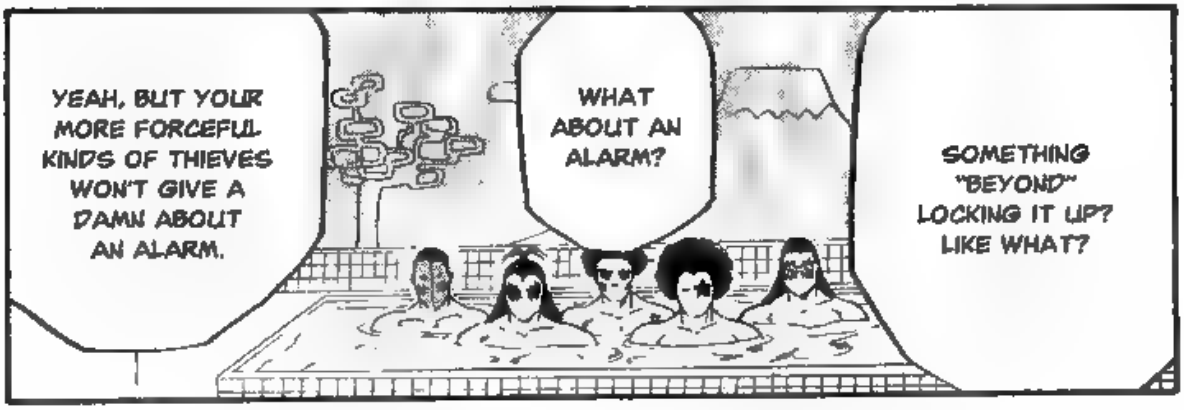
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY SO IN THE FIRST PLACE?!
WHAT?! IT WAS UNLOCKED?
ACTUALLY, NO.

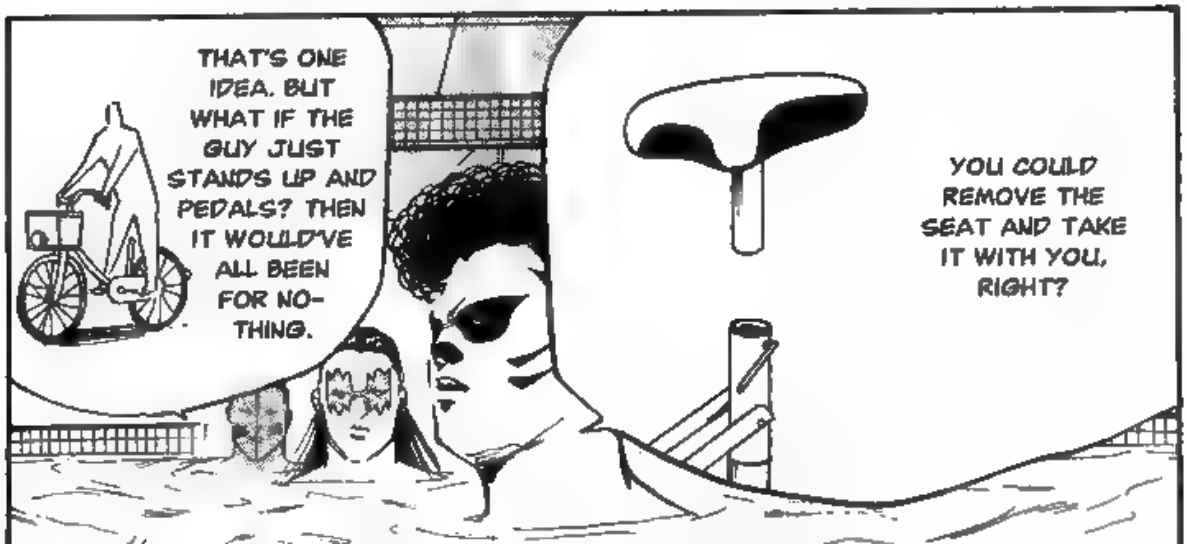
OF COURSE, WHOEVER STOLE IT IS THE REAL BAD GUY HERE, BUT HAVEN'T YOU EVER HEARD OF "AN OUNCE OF PREVENTION"? YOU CAN'T JUST LEAVE YOUR BIKE UNLOCKED! THIS DISCUSSION'S FINISHED, END OF STORY.
THAT'S JUST ABSURD! IT'S LIKE PUTTING UP A SIGN THAT SAYS "FREE BIKE!"

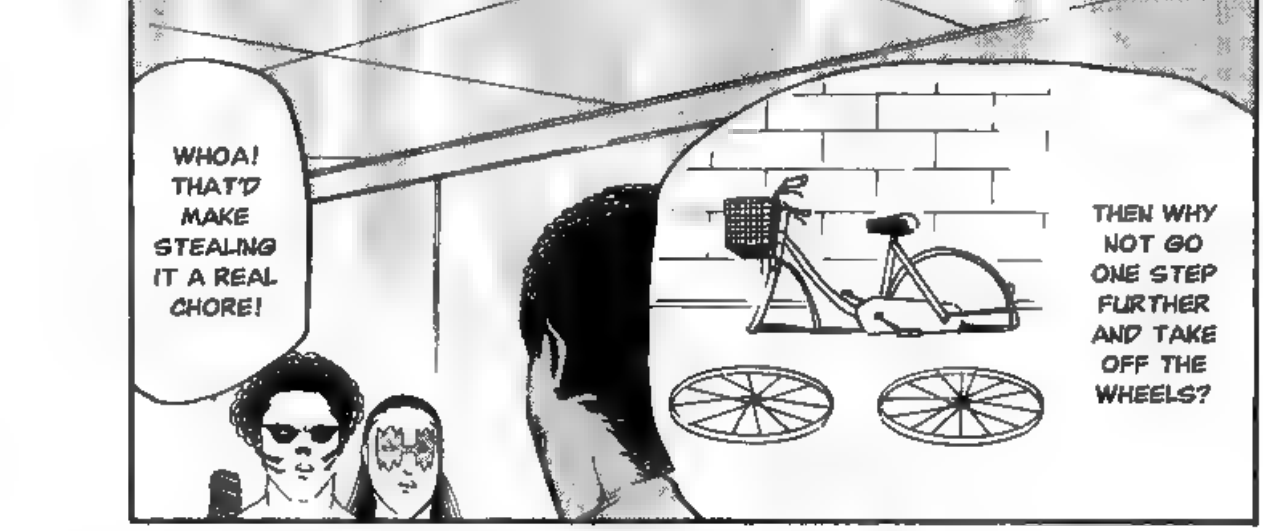
HUH?!
NO, YOU'RE PROBABLY RIGHT.
UH-OH! IT LOOKS LIKE HE'S COMING UP WITH A COUNTER-ARGUMENT!
I WILL HAVE TO CONCUR.
IT WOULD BE A WASTE OF TIME TO ATTEMPT TO LECTURE A THIEF ON WHY HE SHOULDN'T STEAL. IT WOULD BE FAR MORE EFFECTIVE, EVEN BENEFICIAL, TO LECTURE THE ORIGINAL OWNER ON THE IMPORTANCE OF LOCKING THINGS UP PROPERLY.
YOU'RE MAKING THE ASSUMPTION THAT THOSE WHO FAIL TO LOCK THINGS UP ARE AT FAULT, BUT THE FACT IS THAT A LOCK IS NO GUARANTEE OF SECURITY.
WHAT?
HOWEVER, THERE IS ONE FLAW IN YOUR REASONING.
ULTIMATELY, THE QUESTION OF WHETHER OR NOT SOMETHING HAS BEEN PROPERLY SECURED IS OF LITTLE IMPORTANCE!
OH. YEAH, THAT'S TRUE.
HOW MANY TIMES HAS AN ITEM BEEN STOLEN EVEN AFTER IT'S BEEN LOCKED UP?

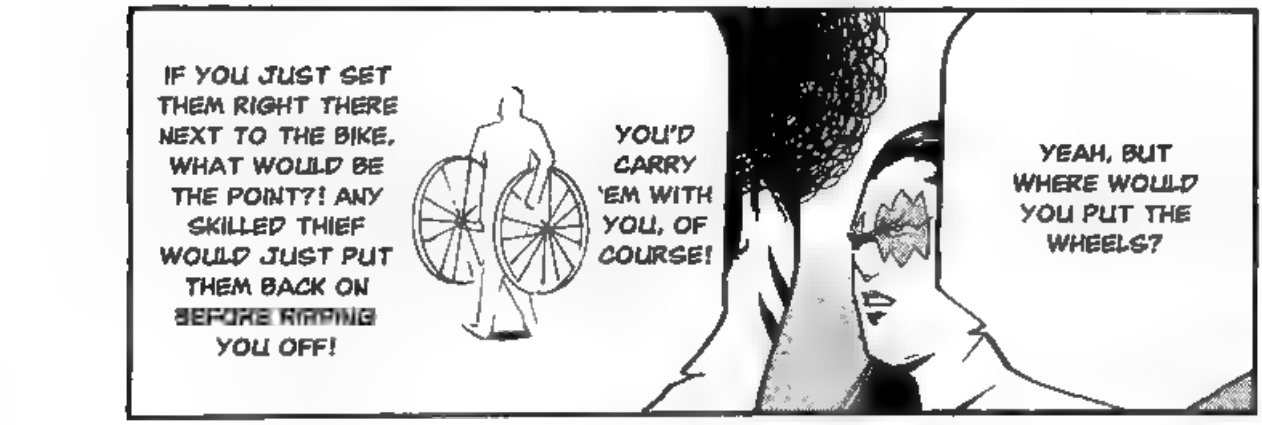

I THINK THIS CONVERSATION GOT OFF TRACK SOMEWHERE...
Now he's pissed!
LOOK, WHAT I'M TRYING TO SAY IS THAT YOU CAN'T GO AROUND ACTING ALL HAUGHTY OVER SOMETHING LIKE A KEY! YOU NEED TO KNOCK YOURSELF DOWN A COUPLE NOTCHES AND REALIZE THAT THINGS CAN GET STOLEN EVEN AFTER YOU'VE LOCKED THEM UP!
YEAH, BUT IT DOESN'T HURT TO BE ON THE SAFE SIDE.

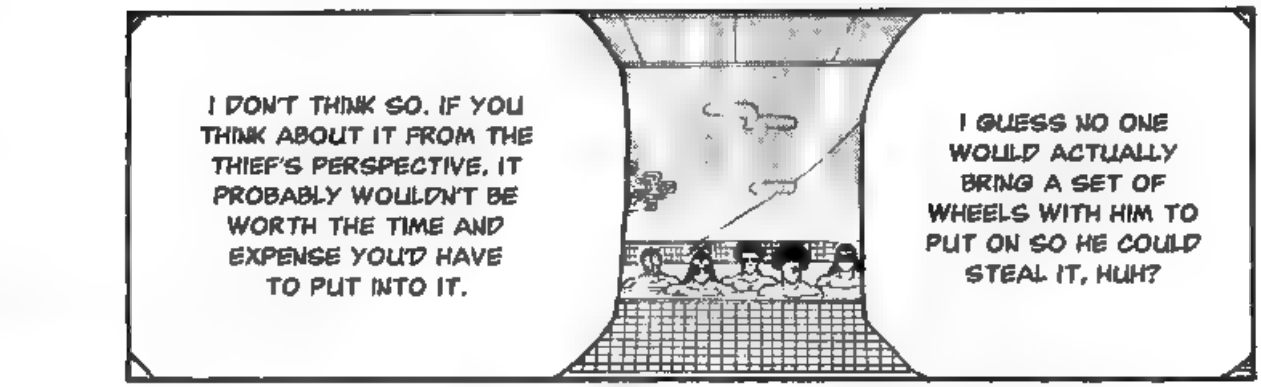
YOU NEED TO DO SOMETHING MORE! ANY ELEMENTARY-SCHOOL KID CAN PUT A KEY INTO A LOCK--YOU HAVE TO DO SOMETHING THAT'LL MAKE YOU SAY, "THERE'S NO WAY IN HELL THIS THING'S GETTING STOLEN NOW!" ONCE YOU'VE DONE THAT, THEN I'LL CONCEDE YOUR POINT.
WELL, WHAT'S THE ALTERNATIVE?


YEAH, BUT YOUR MORE FORCEFUL KINDS OF THIEVES WON'T GIVE A DAMN ABOUT AN ALARM.
WHAT ABOUT AN ALARM?
SOMETHING "BEYOND" LOCKING IT UP? LIKE WHAT?


THAT'S ONE IDEA. BUT WHAT IF THE GUY JUST STANDS UP AND PEDALS? THEN IT WOULD'VE ALL BEEN FOR NOTHING.
YOU COULD REMOVE THE SEAT AND TAKE IT WITH YOU, RIGHT?


WHOA! THAT'D MAKE STEALING IT A REAL CHORE!
THEN WHY NOT GO ONE STEP FURTHER AND TAKE OFF THE WHEELS?


IF YOU JUST SET THEM RIGHT THERE NEXT TO THE BIKE, WHAT WOULD BE THE POINT?! ANY SKILLED THIEF WOULD JUST PUT THEM BACK ON BEFORE RIPPING YOU OFF!
YOU'D CARRY 'EM WITH YOU, OF COURSE!
YEAH, BUT WHERE WOULD YOU PUT THE WHEELS?


I DON'T THINK SO. IF YOU THINK ABOUT IT FROM THE THIEF'S PERSPECTIVE, IT PROBABLY WOULDN'T BE WORTH THE TIME AND EXPENSE YOU'D HAVE TO PUT INTO IT.
I GUESS NO ONE WOULD ACTUALLY BRING A SET OF WHEELS WITH HIM TO PUT ON SO HE COULD STEAL IT, HUH?

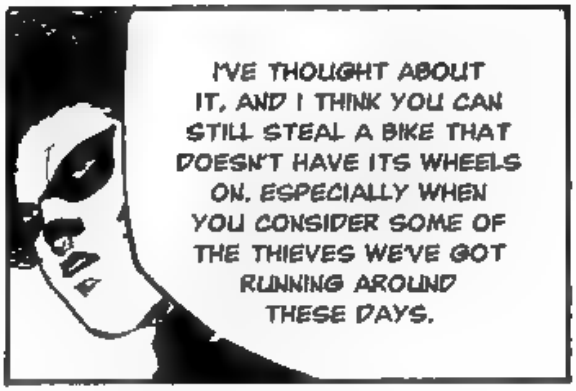
YEAH. THAT'S A MAN'S MAN, ALRIGHT.
A MAN WHO'D GO SO FAR AS TO REMOVE HIS OWN WHEELS TO PREVENT HIS BIKE FROM BEING STOLEN... THAT'S A MAN'S MAN RIGHT THERE.

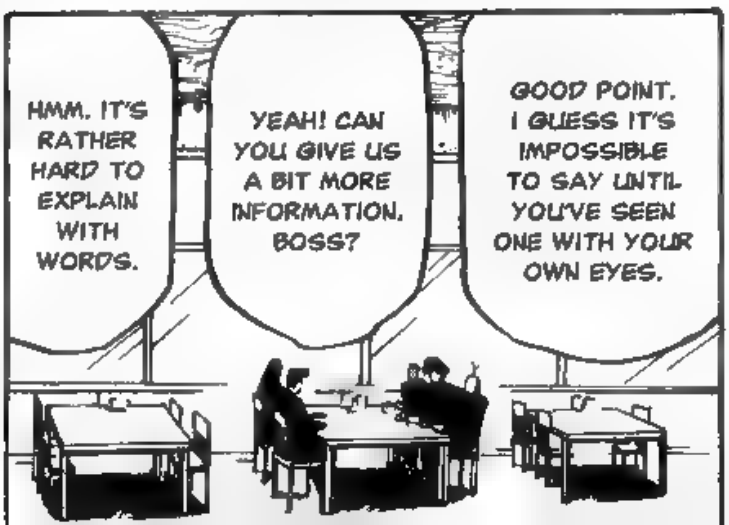
THEIR CONVERSATION ACTUALLY TIED INTO THE STORY!

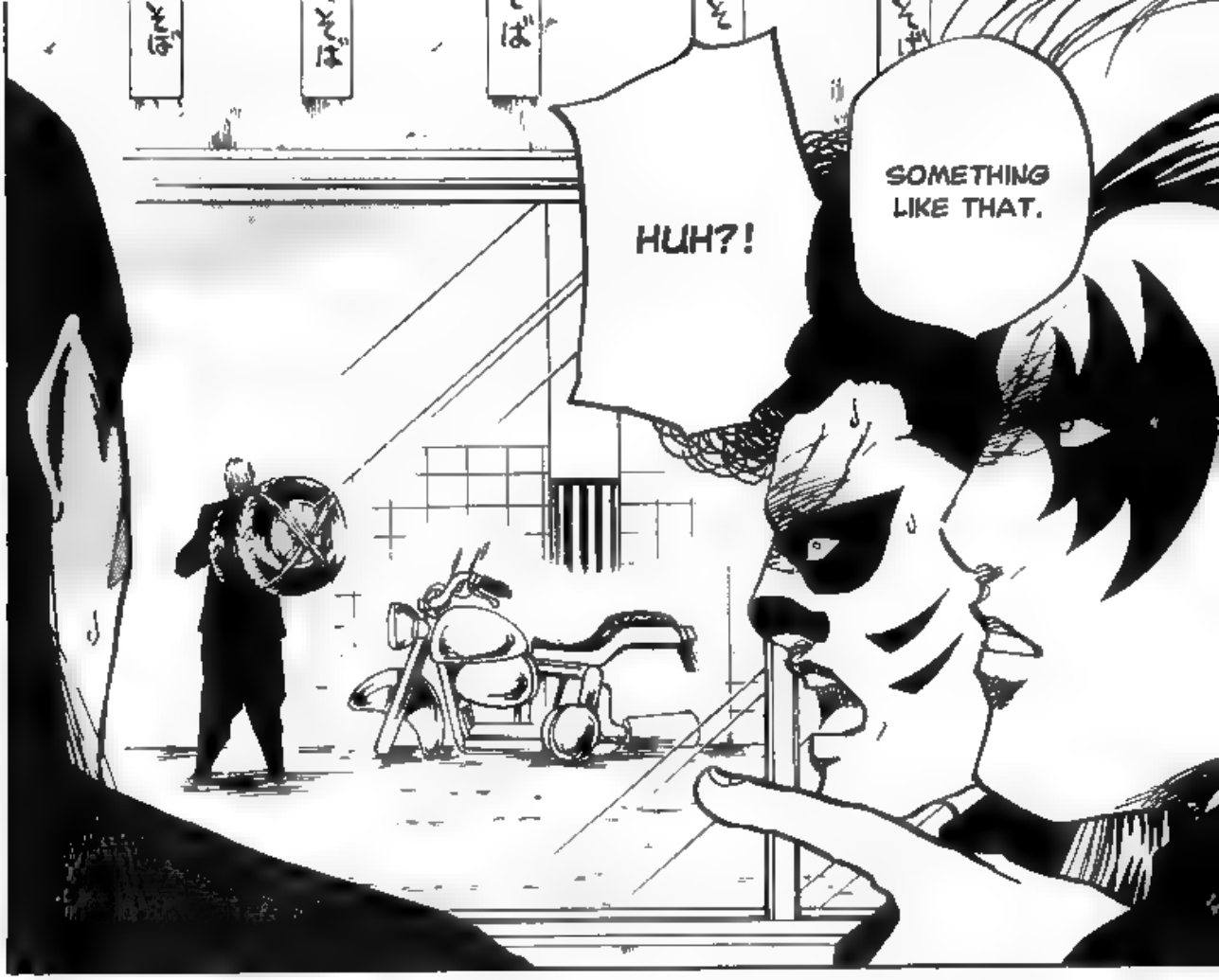
CHAPTER 183: **IMAGINE**

COME ON, BOSS! WE WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT IT! YOU KNOW, HOW YOU CAN STOP YOUR BIKE FROM BEING STOLEN IF YOU TAKE OFF THE WHEELS.
UH...WHAT EXACTLY WAS THAT AGAIN?
HEY, I'D LIKE TO GO BACK TO WHAT WE WERE TALKING ABOUT EARLIER, THAT THING WITH THE BIKES.

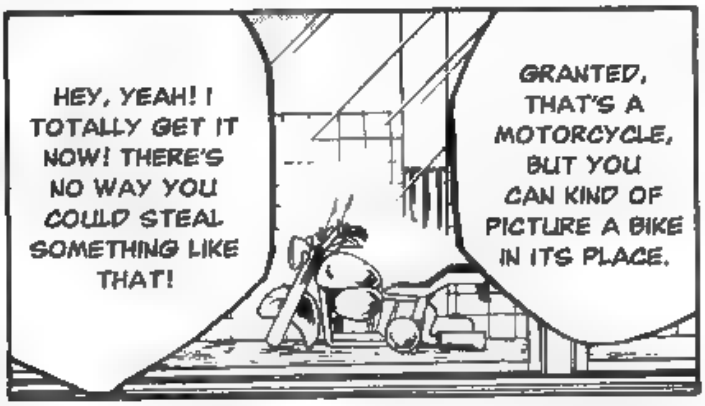
THE THING IS, I'VE NEVER ACTUALLY **SEEN** A BIKE WITH NO WHEELS. I CAN'T REALLY PICTURE IT.
YOU'VE GOTTA BE KIDDING ME! THINK ABOUT IT-- WE'RE TALKING ABOUT A BIKE WITH NO WHEELS! THERE'S NO WAY!


I'VE THOUGHT ABOUT IT, AND I THINK YOU CAN STILL STEAL A BIKE THAT DOESN'T HAVE ITS WHEELS ON. ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU CONSIDER SOME OF THE THIEVES WE'VE GOT RUNNING AROUND THESE DAYS.


HMM. IT'S RATHER HARD TO EXPLAIN WITH WORDS.
YEAH! CAN YOU GIVE US A BIT MORE INFORMATION, BOSS?
GOOD POINT. I GUESS IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO SAY UNTIL YOU'VE SEEN ONE WITH YOUR OWN EYES.


HUH?!
SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

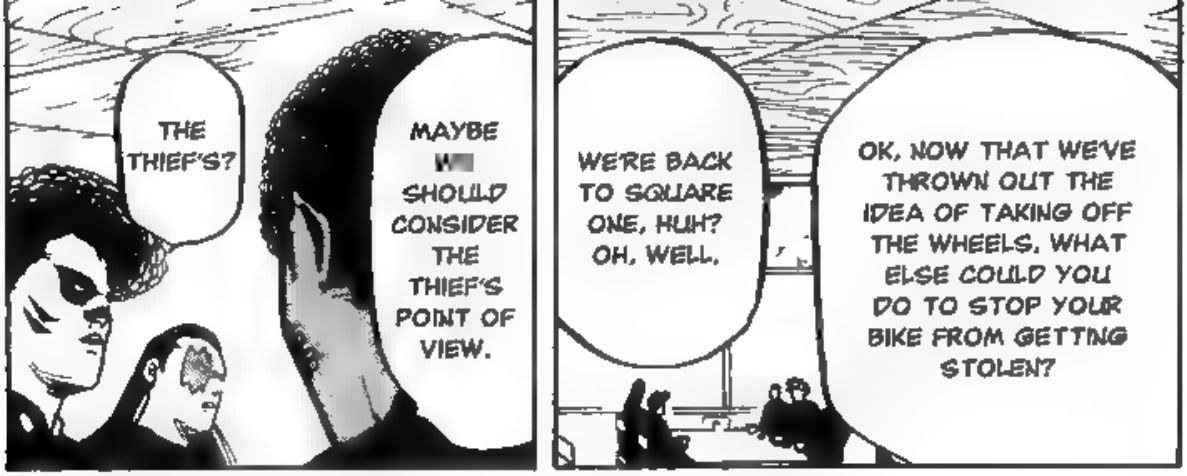
HUH?
I'M NOT SO SURE.


HEY, YEAH! I TOTALLY GET IT NOW! THERE'S NO WAY YOU COULD STEAL SOMETHING LIKE THAT!
GRANTED, THAT'S A MOTORCYCLE, BUT YOU CAN KIND OF PICTURE A BIKE IN ITS PLACE.

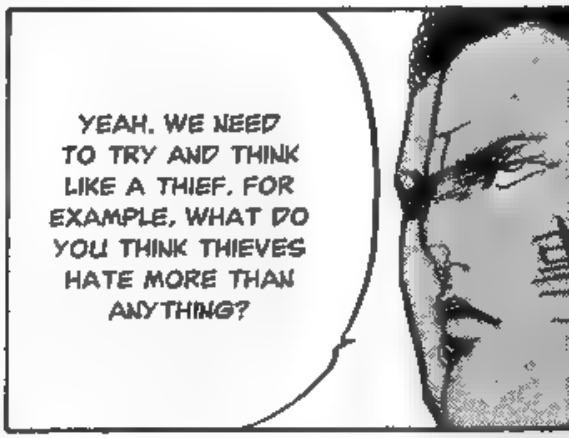
YOU ALL ARE OVERLOOKING SOMETHING VERY IMPORTANT. DO YOU KNOW WHAT IT IS?
YOU'RE SAYING IT'S NOT?

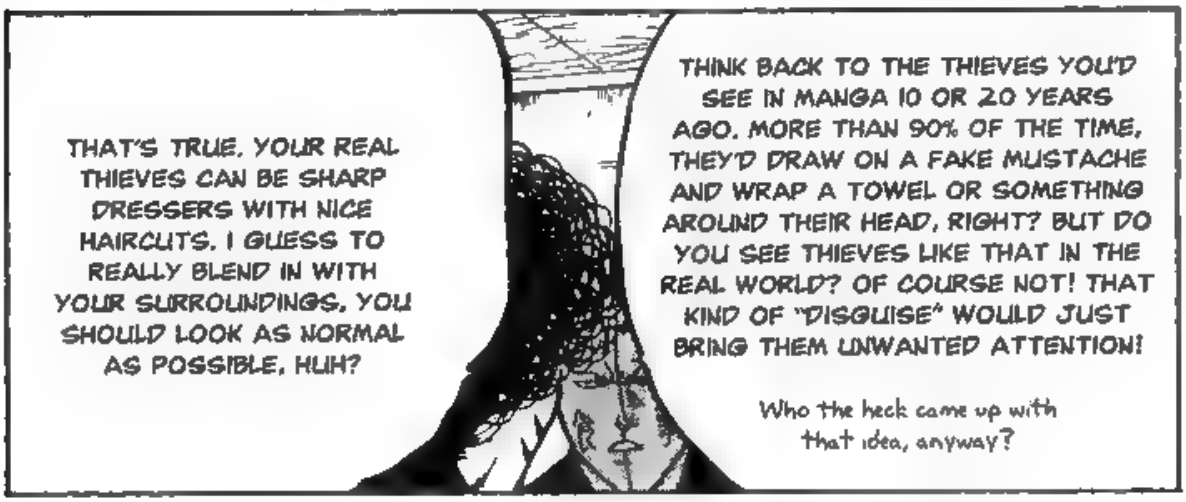
IS REMOVING THE WHEELS REALLY ENOUGH?

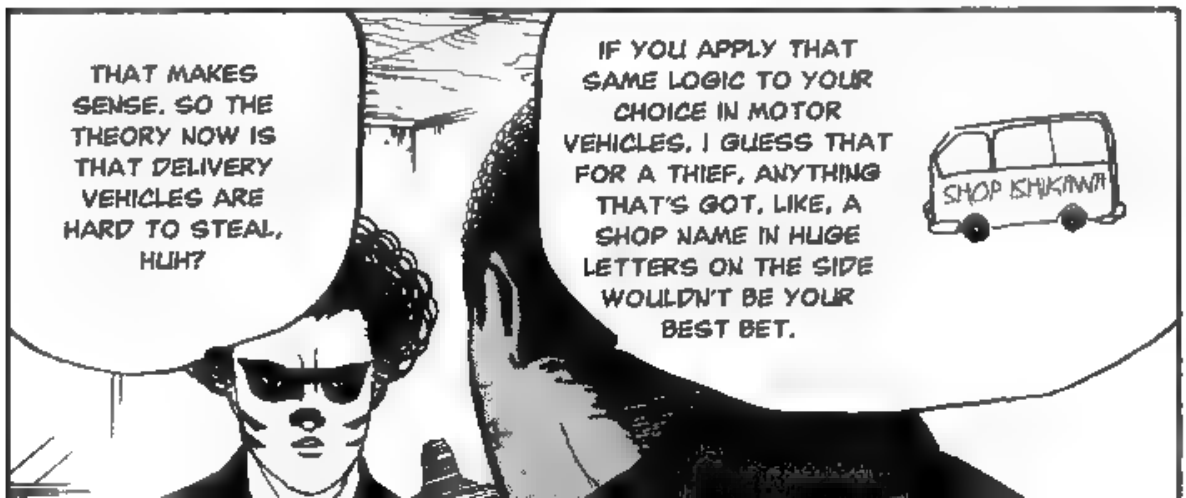
BUT...
LOOK, REMOVING THE WHEELS WILL DEFINITELY MAKE IT HARD TO STEAL. I GIVE YOU THAT.
YOU MEAN WE'VE MADE A MISTAKE SOMEWHERE?
YEAH, THAT LOOKS LIKE SOMETHING THE TRASH GUYS WOULD PICK UP.
OH!
THEN YOU RUN THE RISK OF IT BEING MISTAKEN FOR TRASH AND SOMEBODY COLLECTING IT.
K-CHINK
K-CHINK
I AGREE. IF YOU WENT THROUGH ALL THAT JUST TO HAVE SOMEBODY THROW IT AWAY, IT'D BE [illegible] SALT INTO THE WOUND.
I THINK IT'D PROBABLY BE A BETTER IDEA TO LEAVE THE WHEELS ON.


THE THIEF'S?
MAYBE WE SHOULD CONSIDER THE THIEF'S POINT OF VIEW.
WE'RE BACK TO SQUARE ONE, HUH? OH, WELL.
OK, NOW THAT WE'VE THROWN OUT THE IDEA OF TAKING OFF THE WHEELS, WHAT ELSE COULD YOU DO TO STOP YOUR BIKE FROM GETTING STOLEN?

YOU READY?
MORE THAN ANYTHING, THIEVES HATE BEING DISCOVERED.
I DON'T KNOW. WHAT?

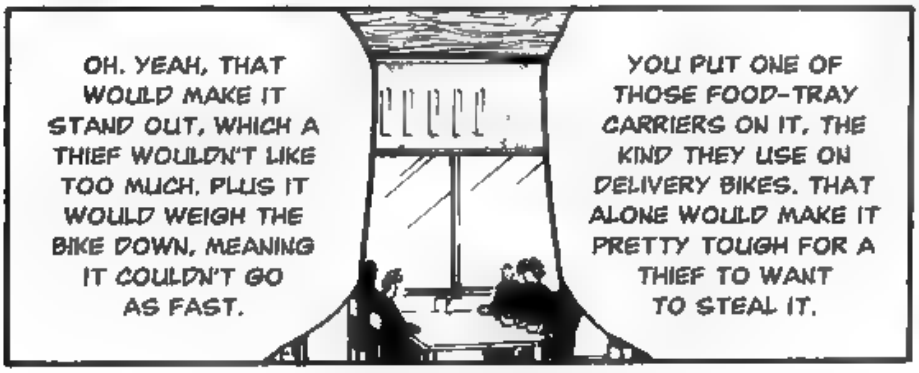

YEAH. WE NEED TO TRY AND THINK LIKE A THIEF. FOR EXAMPLE, WHAT DO YOU THINK THIEVES HATE MORE THAN ANYTHING?

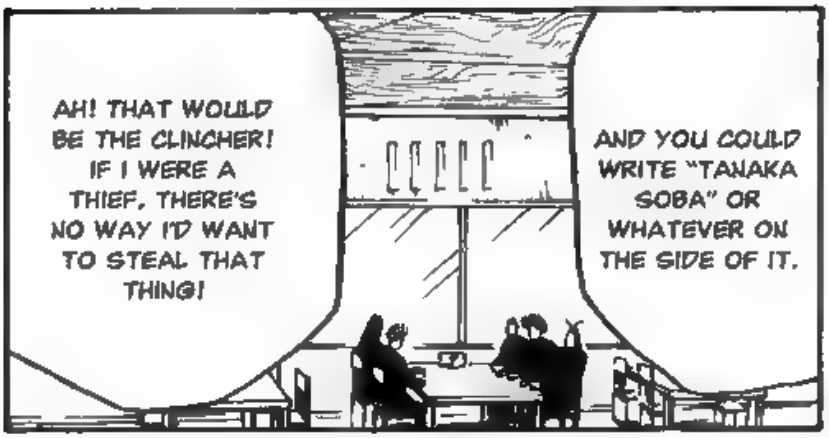

THAT'S TRUE. YOUR REAL THIEVES CAN BE SHARP DRESSERS WITH NICE HAIRCUTS. I GUESS TO REALLY BLEND IN WITH YOUR SURROUNDINGS, YOU SHOULD LOOK AS NORMAL AS POSSIBLE, HUH?
THINK BACK TO THE THIEVES YOU'D SEE IN MANGA 10 OR 20 YEARS AGO. MORE THAN 90% OF THE TIME, THEY'D DRAW ON A FAKE MUSTACHE AND WRAP A TOWEL OR SOMETHING AROUND THEIR HEAD, RIGHT? BUT DO YOU SEE THIEVES LIKE THAT IN THE REAL WORLD? OF COURSE NOT! THAT KIND OF "DISGUISE" WOULD JUST BRING THEM UNWANTED ATTENTION!
Who the heck came up with that idea, anyway?


THAT MAKES SENSE. SO THE THEORY NOW IS THAT DELIVERY VEHICLES ARE HARD TO STEAL, HUH?
IF YOU APPLY THAT SAME LOGIC TO YOUR CHOICE IN MOTOR VEHICLES, I GUESS THAT FOR A THIEF, ANYTHING THAT'S GOT, LIKE, A SHOP NAME IN HUGE LETTERS ON THE SIDE WOULDN'T BE YOUR BEST BET.
SHOP ISHIKAWA

I-LIKE WHAT?!
BUT IT WOULDN'T TAKE MUCH TO TURN IT INTO SOMETHING VERY DIFFICULT TO STEAL.

SURE.
LET'S COME UP WITH AN EXAMPLE. YOU SEE THAT AMERICAN-LOOKING BIKE OVER THERE? A TOP-DOLLAR BIKE LIKE THAT WOULD MAKE AN EASY TARGET FOR THIEVES, RIGHT?


OH. YEAH, THAT WOULD MAKE IT STAND OUT, WHICH A THIEF WOULDN'T LIKE TOO MUCH. PLUS IT WOULD WEIGH THE BIKE DOWN, MEANING IT COULDN'T GO AS FAST.
YOU PUT ONE OF THOSE FOOD-TRAY CARRIERS ON IT, THE KIND THEY USE ON DELIVERY BIKES. THAT ALONE WOULD MAKE IT PRETTY TOUGH FOR A THIEF TO WANT TO STEAL IT.


AH! THAT WOULD BE THE CLINCHER! IF I WERE A THIEF, THERE'S NO WAY I'D WANT TO STEAL THAT THING!
AND YOU COULD WRITE "TANAKA SOBA" OR WHATEVER ON THE SIDE OF IT.

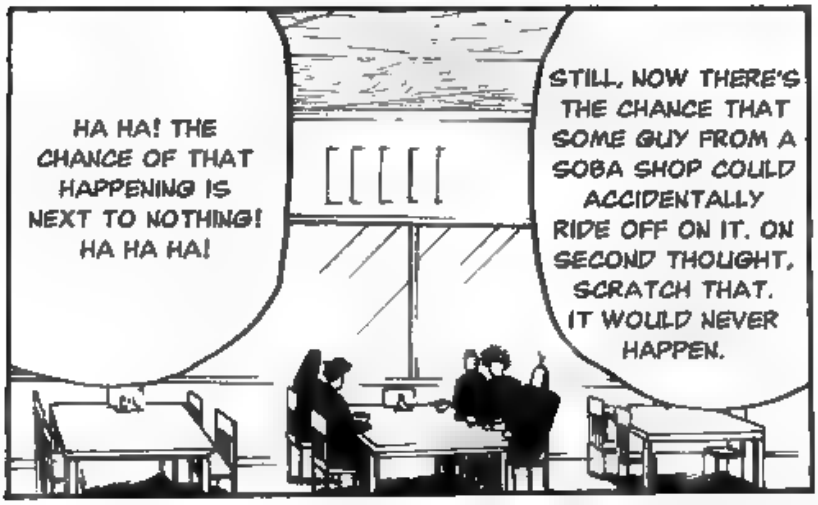
I'VE GOTTA TELL YA, I'VE NEVER IN MY LIFE SEEN AN AMERICAN-STYLE BIKE WITH A FOOD-CARRIER TRAY ON IT THAT HAS "TANAKA SOBA" OR WHATEVER WRITTEN ON THE SIDE.

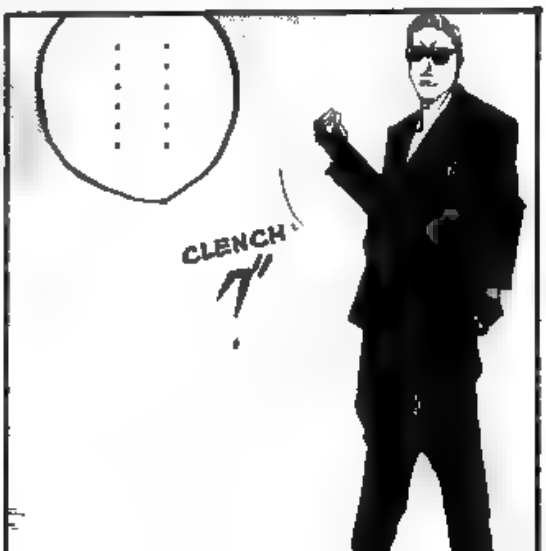
YOU MIND IF I SAY SOME-THING?
IT'S NEAR PER-FECT!

HMM. I'VE NEVER SEEN SUCH A BIKE, BUT IF I HAD TO TRY AND VISUALIZE IT...
I'VE NEVER SEEN A BIKE LIKE THAT, EITHER. AND IF YOU ASK ME, THERE'S NO WAY IT COULD EXIST.
COULD A BIKE LIKE THAT EVEN EXIST?!
そば
そば
そば
そば
そば
WHOA! SO THAT'S HOW IT WOULD LOOK!
I'D SAY IT WOULD LOOK [illegible] LIKE THAT.
JAPAN SOBA

MAN. THAT'S ONE UNSTEAL-ABLE BIKE.
YUP. A BIKE LIKE THAT'S GOT UNBEATABLE SECURITY!
JAPAN SOBA

INDEED.
I WHOLEHEARTEDLY AGREE. SUCH A BIKE COULD NEVER BE STOLEN!


STILL, NOW THERE'S THE CHANCE THAT SOME GUY FROM A SOBA SHOP COULD ACCIDENTALLY RIDE OFF ON IT. ON SECOND THOUGHT, SCRATCH THAT. IT WOULD NEVER HAPPEN.
HA HA! THE CHANCE OF THAT HAPPENING IS NEXT TO NOTHING! HA HA HA!


CLENCH

HAYASHIDA—NOW WORKING TO POPULAR ACCLAIM.

クロマティ高校校内新聞

THE CROMARTIE GAZETTE
Published By The Cromartie Newspaper Club

FOR REAL?!

STARTING OCTOBER, *CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL* WILL BE AN ANIME SERIES!

To everyone at TV Tokyo– You all are some manly men!

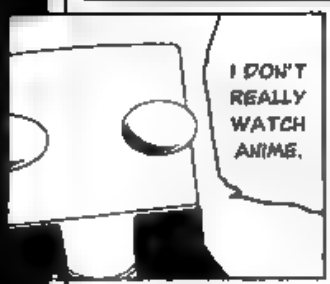
The astonishing news has surfaced that *Cromartie High School* is going to be made into an anime series! Talk about a bolt from the blue! Upon hearing this news, our emotions ranged from disbelief ("You gotta be kiddin' me!") to anger ("If this is a joke, it isn't funny!") before finally settling on anxiety ("I don't know... Can the Japanese animation industry handle it?") By all accounts, the news appears to be genuine

Kamiyama, who is as shocked as the editorial staff at the news of the upcoming *Cromartie High School* anime

The anime is set to begin October 2nd, and each 15-minute episode will air Thursdays at 0100 hours. Or, to put it more simply, Fridays at 1:00 a.m. Late-night broadcasts. 15 minutes per episode. The whole thing may sound more than a tad unreasonable, but no! I say it's perfectly in keeping with the spirit of *Cromartie High*. If the news had broken that something like this would be airing during prime time, I'm sure many of the readers out there would be going, "Whoa, what?" I don't know if that's a good idea." If anything, TV Tokyo and the show's sponsors should be praised for their bravery and downright manliness for taking on the challenge of adapting *Cromartie* into an anime. And to director Hiroaki Sakurai and the people at Production I.G, you, too, are men! Incidentally, broadcasting areas for the show have yet to be decided, so all that can be done now is to start praying that it airs in your city! The wait for the show to begin is on! So, yeah, just please wait

The show begins Friday, October 2nd at 1:00 a.m.! This time, the *Cromartie* you're used to seeing in still pictures will be moving! And I'm not talking about a flipbook either!

Upon hearing the news of the upcoming *Cromartie* animation, author Eiji Nonaka's response was the rather dispirited-sounding "Huh? An anime? You're sure it's not, like, a flipbook or something? Hmm. Oh, yeah I'm happy in your everyday sense of the word." Meanwhile, a Mr. Moriyama, one of the producers on the show, had this to say of the project: "I think it'll be OK. Probably." What incredible vagueness!



Hey, you can't say something like that!

In any event, an animated version of *Cromartie* means that viewers will actually get to see their favorite characters brought to life, a dream (or is that nightmare?) come true! A walking Mechazawa! A talking Kamiyama! A spacing-out Hayashida! Heck, even Freddie and the Gorilla could start talking! Actually, that was kind of a lie – but in any case, to all you fans out there, get ready to see some *Cromartie*! I guess the only thing we have to worry about now is some TV exec going, "Whoops, we had this confused with a different manga. Sorry." More details are expected to be released during the coming days. They better not forget to make a home page for it, either! Your word for the day is "audacious"!

(Originally published in Issue 39 of *Shukan Shonen Magazine* 2003

So there you have it, the jaw-dropping news of the upcoming *Cromartie High School* anime. (We thought there was going to be more to it than just that, but...) Anyway, in all honesty, something like this wouldn't have been possible without the downright manliness of everyone involved with the project. Luckily, we have yet to receive any news that *Cromartie* was mistaken for another manga, so either they really wanted to adapt this story into an anime or they just haven't had the chance to tell us of their mistake.

THERE ARE FAR TOO MANY OF THEM BY NOW, BUT HERE IT IS— YOUR INTRODUCTION TO THE CHARACTERS!

KIICHI FUJIMOTO

Fujimoto is the so-called Internet Kingpin, a man of common sense who is quite particular about netiquette. I sometimes get letters asking who that guy with the glasses is that's always hanging around him, but the truth is, I hadn't really thought about it so I don't know. It would be pretty shocking if we found out they were actually twins, huh?

NOBORU YAMAGUCHI

Leader of the 1st years at Destrade Industrial High School, Yamaguchi has adopted the personal motto of "Friendship, hard work and metal shop." He is called "The Kingpin of Laughter" and is extremely critical of other's humor. He is often incensed by the words and actions of his underling Ishikawa, who receives such physical abuse at Yamaguchi's hands that he has developed some sympathetic fans of his own. I guess I'll just come right out and say it--there's no way Yamaguchi can be 16!

THE ASSASSIN

A hit man hired by a certain motorcycle gang to get rid of Takenouchi, I think. Probably. Who the heck is this guy? Even his name is a mystery. How old is he, anyway? And why would he have been hired by a motorcycle gang?! I get the feeling he's just going to disappear, leaving all of these questions unanswered.

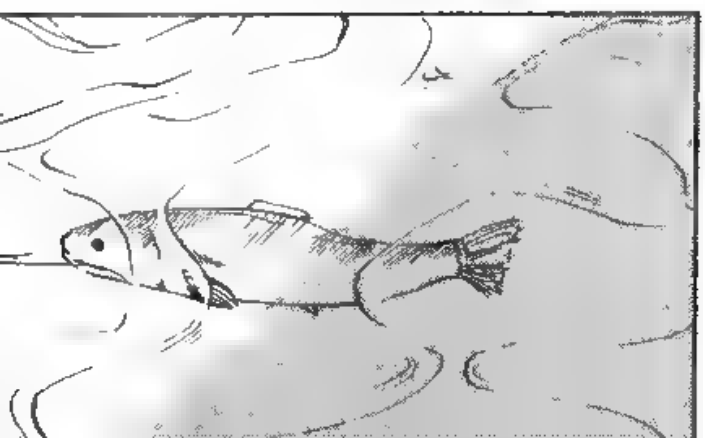
ARA CHAN

The seal that came to Cromartie. Ara-chan got its name from having first shown up in the Arakawa River. This character was originally drawn up out of disgust over the whole Tama-chan incident. I never imagined that later a seal would actually show up in the Arakawa River! I got a good laugh when I saw that on the news.

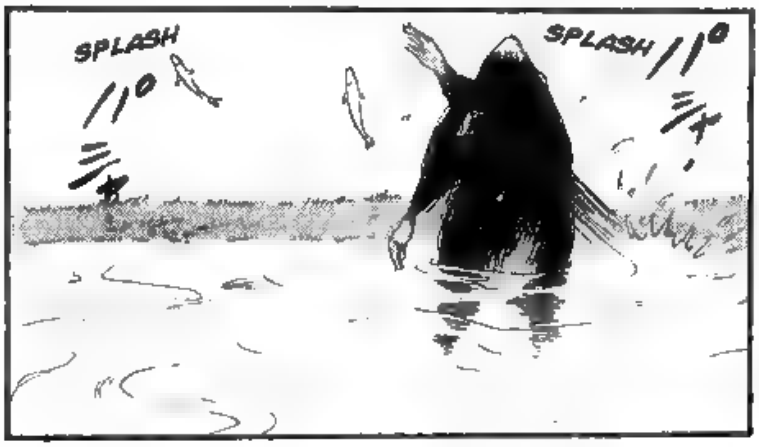
NISHI-KUN

Nishi-kun showed up in Volume 7, being introduced by Kamiyama as "The biggest idiot at our school." In a sense, he is a most dangerous individual indeed. Though he was introduced for the sole purpose of being contrasted with the gorilla, Nishi-kun manages to impress in that he shows Cromartie's halls still have what it takes to produce interesting characters. By the way, he makes no appearance whatsoever in this volume.

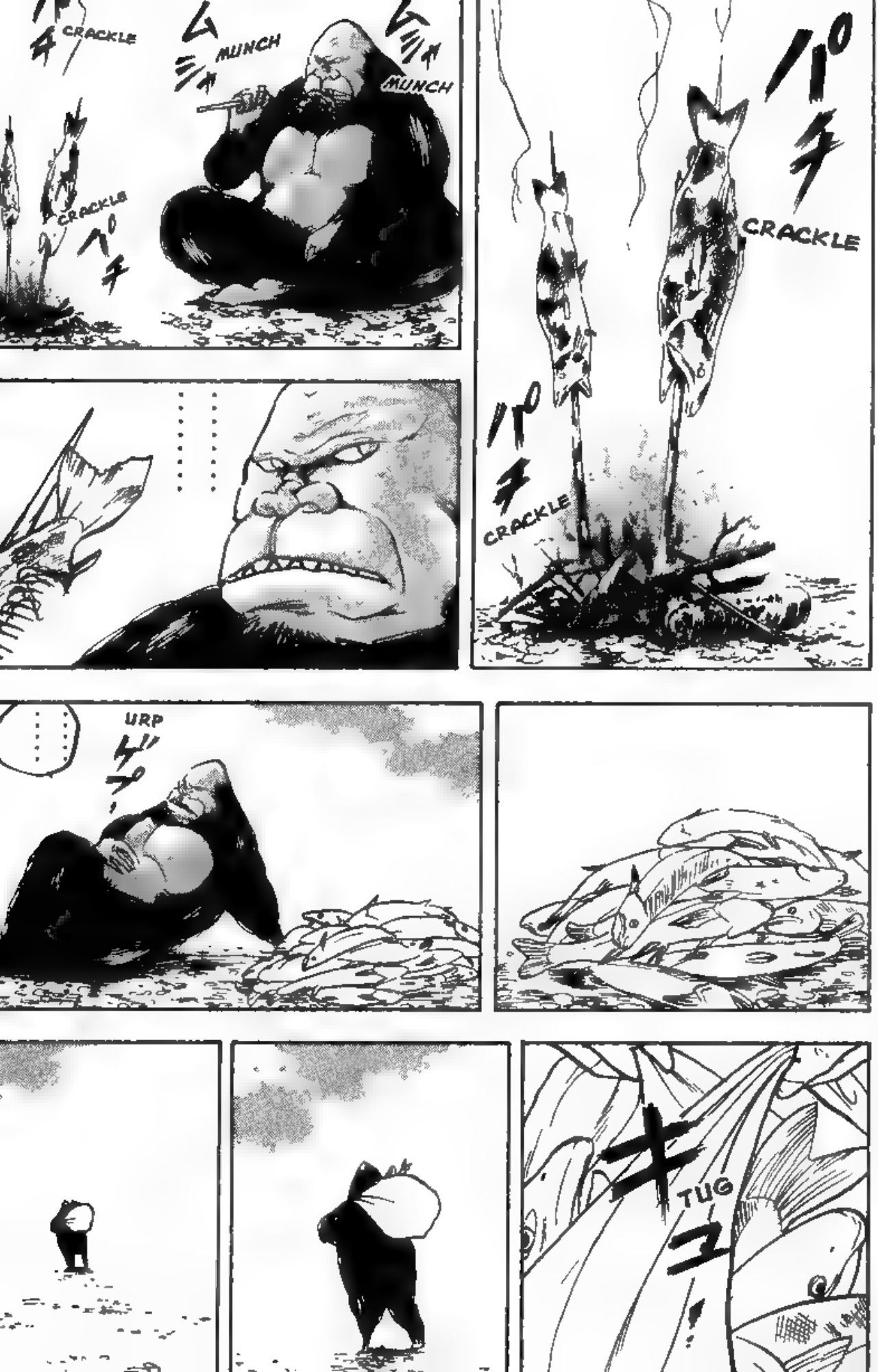
CHAPTER 184 - STREET FISHING MAN



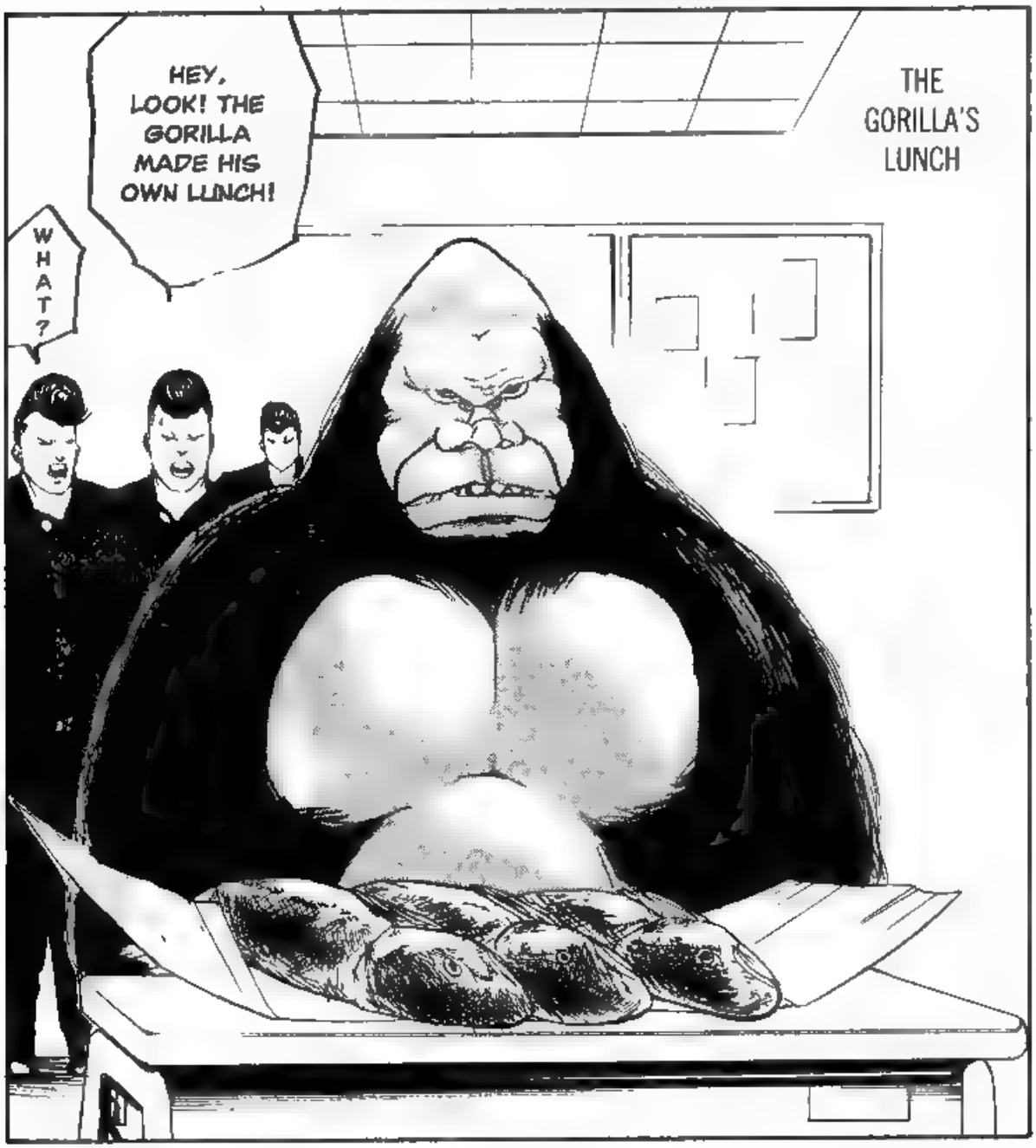
SPLASSH


SPLASH
SPLASH

FLAP
FLAP

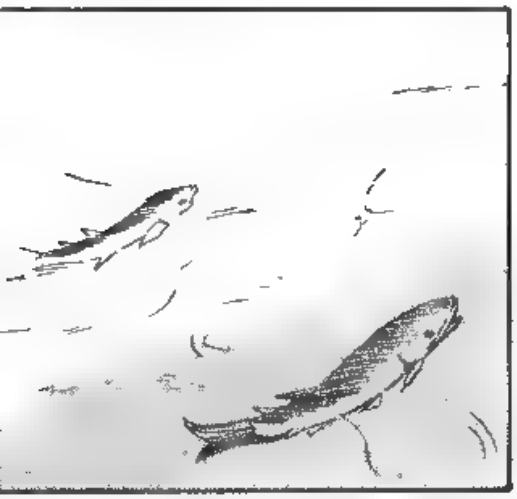

CRACKLE
MUNCH
MUNCH
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
CRACKLE
URP
TUG

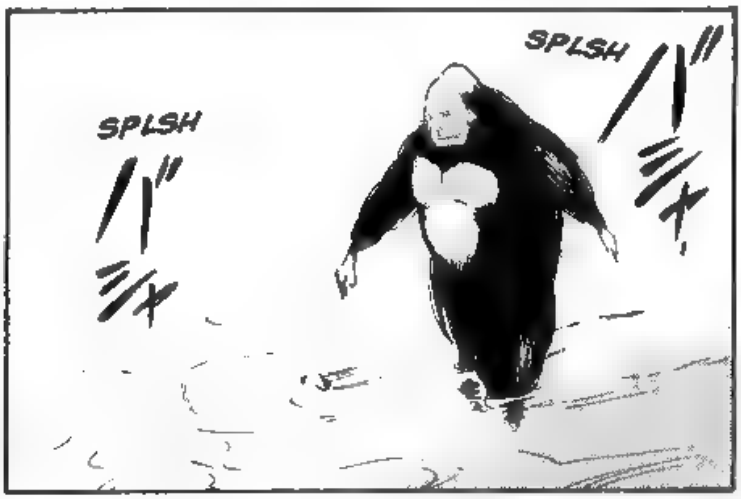
*ON SIGN "CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL"

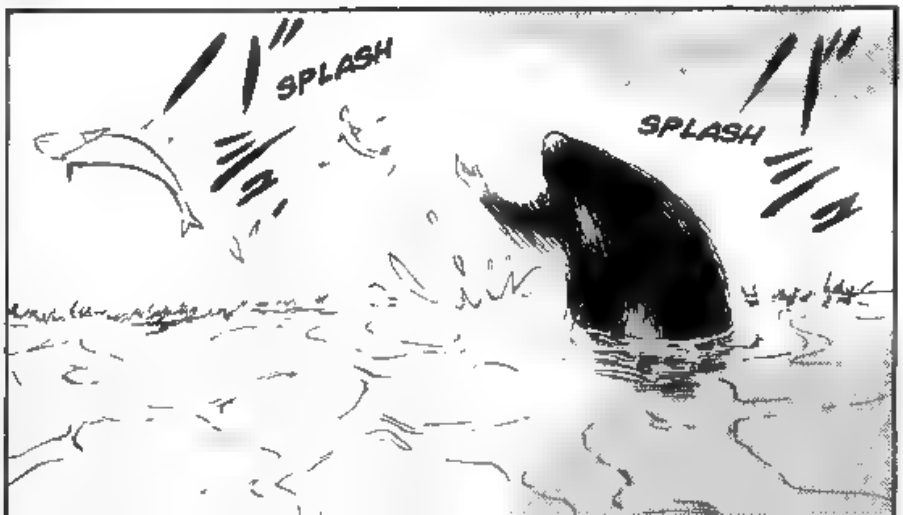


UH, DO GORILLAS EVEN EAT FISH?

SPECIAL
ANOTHER DAY
IN THE LIFE OF
THE GORILLA




SPLSH
SPLSH


SPLASH
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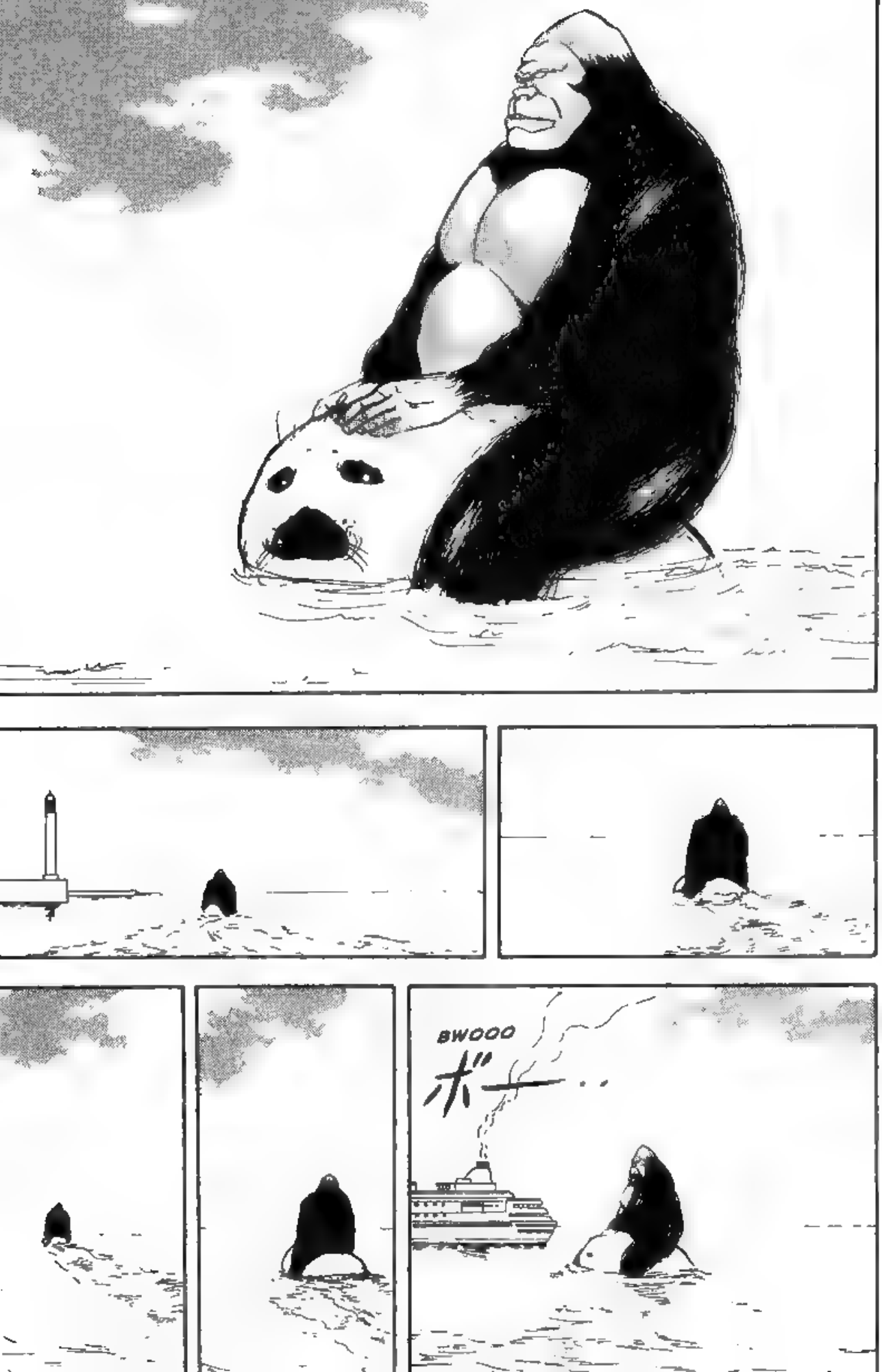
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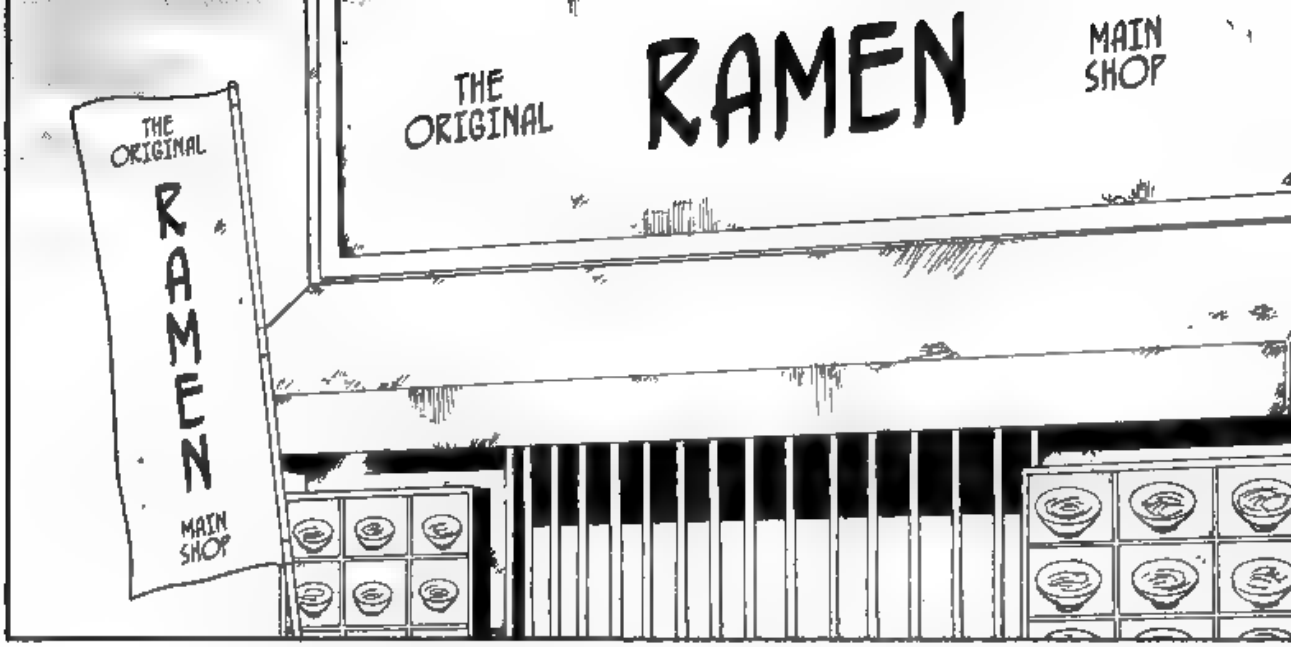
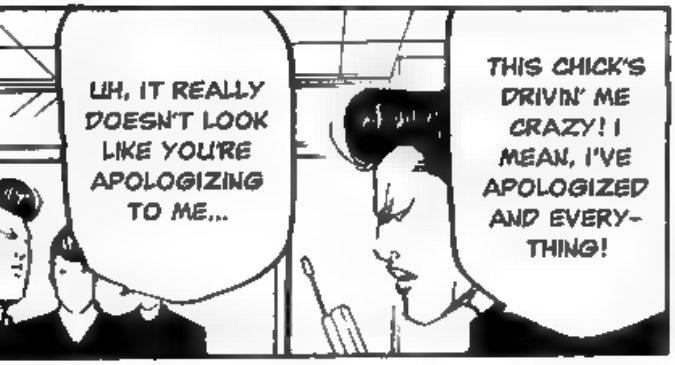


NAH, THAT'S NOT HIM.
THERE'S NO WAY THAT COULD BE OUR GORILLA, RIGHT?
AND NOW FOR THE NEWS. A FEW DAYS AGO, A GORILLA WAS SPOTTED GOING UPSTREAM ON THE BACK OF A SEAL...
SLRRP
ズズー

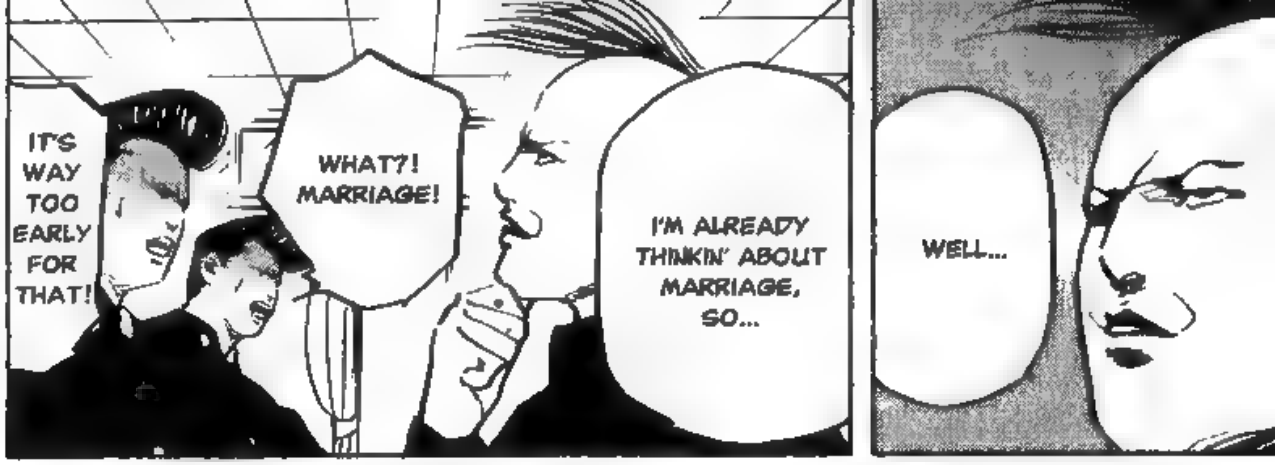
I DON'T THINK THERE ARE ANY OTHER SCHOOLS OUT THERE THAT HAVE A GORILLA.

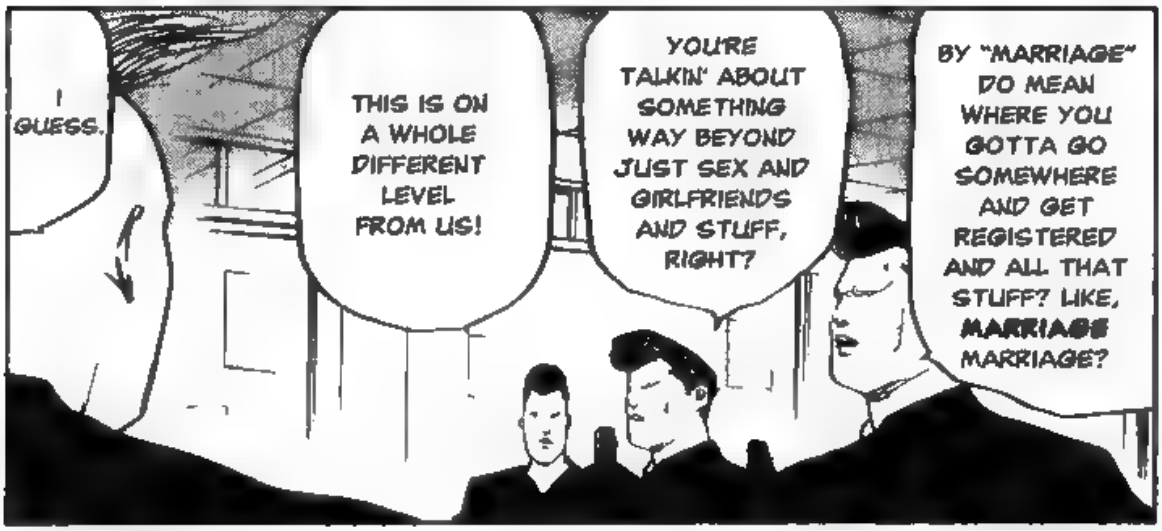
CHAPTER 185: **LOVER'S ROCK**

HELLO?
I KNOW, THAT'S WHY I'VE BEEN APOLOGIZIN' THIS WHOLE TIME! HUH? LOOK, WHAT THE HELL'S YOUR PROBLEM?! I ALREADY SAID I'M SORRY, DAMMIT!

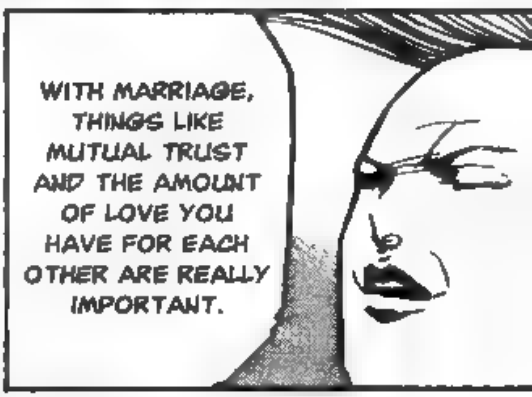


ME?
OH, YEAH? WHAT ABOUT YOU, HAYASHIDA?
I THINK WE ALL HAVE TO GO THROUGH A LOT.
WELL, CHICKS CAN BE HARD TO HANDLE. RELATIONSHIPS CAUSE ALL KINDS OF PROBLEMS.


IT'S WAY TOO EARLY FOR THAT!
WHAT?! MARRIAGE!
I'M ALREADY THINKIN' ABOUT MARRIAGE, SO...
WELL...


I GUESS.
THIS IS ON A WHOLE DIFFERENT LEVEL FROM US!
YOU'RE TALKIN' ABOUT SOMETHING WAY BEYOND JUST SEX AND GIRLFRIENDS AND STUFF, RIGHT?
BY "MARRIAGE" DO MEAN WHERE YOU GOTTA GO SOMEWHERE AND GET REGISTERED AND ALL THAT STUFF? LIKE, MARRIAGE MARRIAGE?

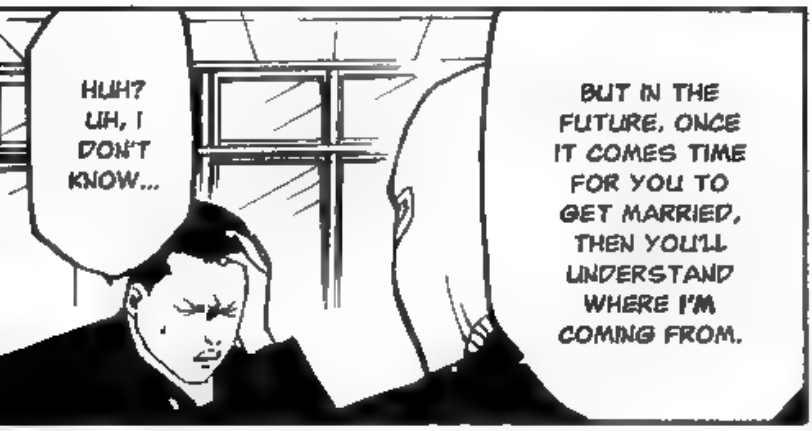
HUH?!
THAT SOUNDS A LITTLE NAÏVE TO ME.


WITH MARRIAGE, THINGS LIKE MUTUAL TRUST AND THE AMOUNT OF LOVE YOU HAVE FOR EACH OTHER ARE REALLY IMPORTANT.

BUT MARRIAGE IS DIFFERENT! IT'S NOT ABOUT JUST THE TWO OF YOU!
IN A NORMAL RELATIONSHIP, IT'S ENOUGH FOR A MAN AND WOMAN TO LOVE EACH OTHER...

YOU DON'T GET IT, DO YOU? LIKE I SAID, IT'S NOT ABOUT JUST THE TWO OF YOU--MARRIAGE INVOLVES YOUR PARENTS, YOUR BROTHERS, YOUR SISTERS.. THE WHOLE FAMILY OF BOTH THE BRIDE AND THE GROOM!
HUH? IF TWO PEOPLE WANNA GET MARRIED, THEY CAN GET MARRIED! WHAT'S THE PROBLEM?!

ULTIMATELY, MARRIAGE IS ABOUT THE TWO PEOPLE WHO ARE GETTING MARRIED! I DON'T THINK YOUR PARENTS AND BROTHERS OR WHATEVER SHOULD HAVE A SAY IN IT!
THAT'S TRUE, BUT I STILL DON'T BUY IT.


HUH? UH, I DON'T KNOW...
BUT IN THE FUTURE, ONCE IT COMES TIME FOR YOU TO GET MARRIED, THEN YOU'LL UNDERSTAND WHERE I'M COMING FROM.

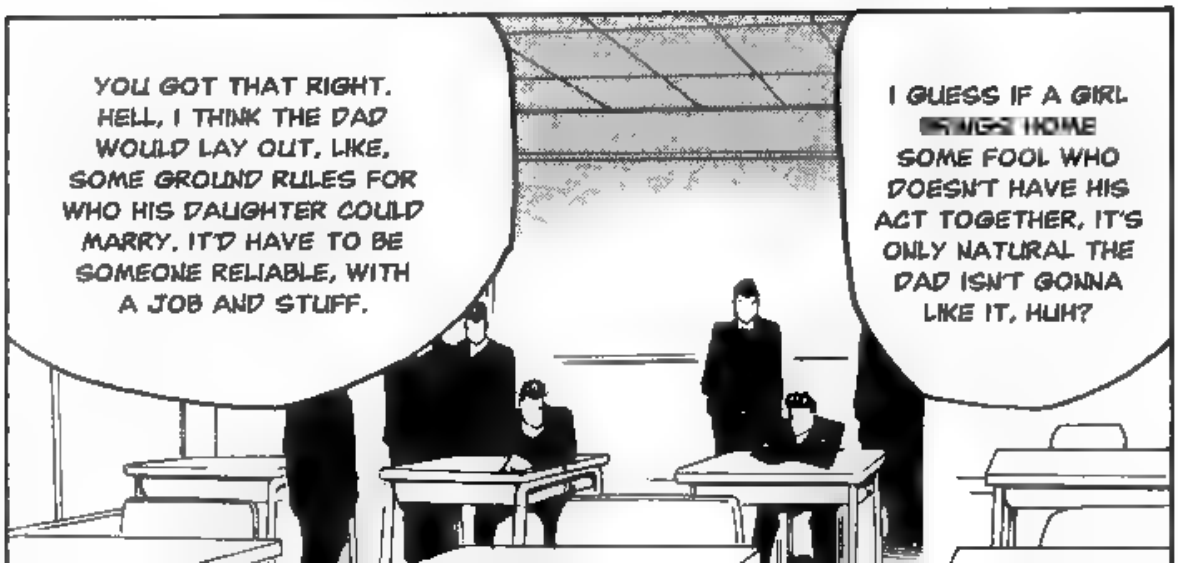
I UNDERSTAND WHERE YOU'RE COMING FROM. I DO.

YES, THAT'S RIGHT! THIS IS THE OPINION OF AN OLD MAN! AND I THINK YOU'D UNDERSTAND ONCE YOU TRY PUTTING YOURSELVES IN THE SAME FRAME OF MIND!
JEEZ, MASK. YOU SOUND KINDA LIKE AN OLD MAN.

EXACTLY. FOR EXAMPLE, LET'S SAY YOU'VE GOT A DAUGHTER. SHE GETS OLD ENOUGH TO WHERE SHE STARTS THINKING ABOUT MARRIAGE, AND ONE DAY SHE BRINGS HOME THIS RUFFIAN TYPE WHO'S STILL WEARING A SCHOOL UNIFORM AND HAS HIS HAIR ALL SPIKED UP. HOW WOULD YOU FEEL ABOUT THAT?
THE FRAME OF MIND... OF AN OLD GUY?

YOU SEE?
MAN, THAT WOULD BE TERRIBLE!

THIS CONVERSATION IS STARTIN' TO GET ME ALL DEPRESSED.
THAT'S PRETTY TERRIBLE, TOO!
IF TWO PEOPLE ARE GOING TO GET MARRIED, THEN OF COURSE THE GROOM-TO-BE IS GOING TO HAVE TO MEET THE GIRL'S PARENTS.


YOU GOT THAT RIGHT. HELL, I THINK THE DAD WOULD LAY OUT, LIKE, SOME GROUND RULES FOR WHO HIS DAUGHTER COULD MARRY. IT'D HAVE TO BE SOMEONE RELIABLE, WITH A JOB AND STUFF.
I GUESS IF A GIRL [illegible] HOME SOME FOOL WHO DOESN'T HAVE HIS ACT TOGETHER, IT'S ONLY NATURAL THE DAD ISN'T GONNA LIKE IT, HUH?

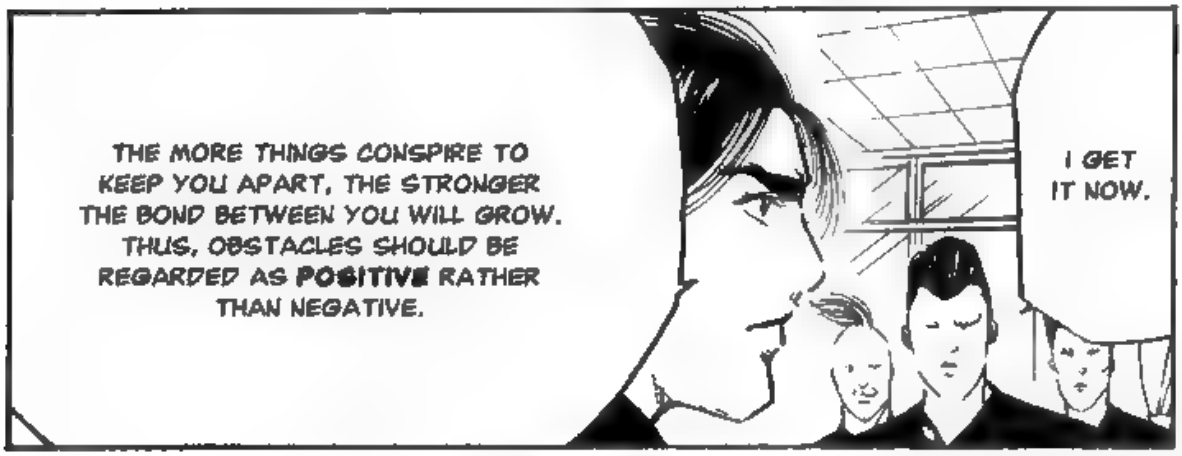
WELL, I HAVEN'T MET HER FATHER YET. AND THE GIRL I'M SEEING JUST GENUINELY LOVES ME, SO SHE HASN'T SET, LIKE, CONDITIONS OR ANYTHING LIKE THAT.
IF YOU'RE ALREADY THINKING ABOUT GETTIN' MARRIED, YOUR LADY MUST HAVE LAID OUT SOME GROUND RULES FOR YOU TOO, RIGHT?
UH, WHAT WAS IT AGAIN? HMM...
WELL, WHAT IS IT?
OH! BUT THERE'S ONE THING THAT HAS TO HAPPEN BEFORE WE CAN GET MARRIED.
OH! NOW I REMEMBER!
. . . . . .
MAN, THAT SOUNDS LIKE A LOT OF WORK.
THAT'S YOUR ONE CONDITION, HUH?
SHE HAS TO GET A DIVORCE FIRST.

WAIT A MINUTE! SHE'S ALREADY MARRIED?!
WHY DIDN'T YOU SAY THAT TO BEGIN WITH?
THAT MEANS YOU'RE HAVING AN AFFAIR!
YEAH. SORRY.

HUH?!
I THINK I MAY KNOW THE ANSWER.

UH, I DON'T REALLY KNOW.
STILL, WHAT MADE YOU WANNA GO AFTER SOMEONE WHO'S ALREADY MARRIED?
I mean, we're still in high school.

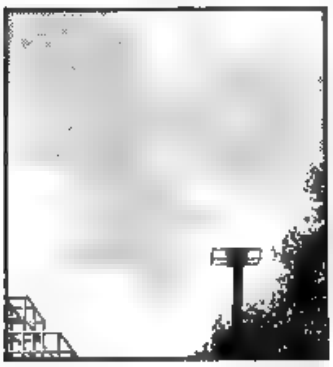
WE HUMANS ARE CREATURES OF CAPRICE--IF TOLD THAT SOMETHING IS FORBIDDEN, WE INSTANTLY CRAVE IT. WHAT'S MORE, IT CANNOT BE SAID THAT THERE IS ANYTHING LOGICAL ABOUT LOVE.
WHEN IT COMES TO LOVE, THE GREATER THE OBSTACLE, THE GREATER THE FLAMES OF ONE'S PASSION WILL BURN.

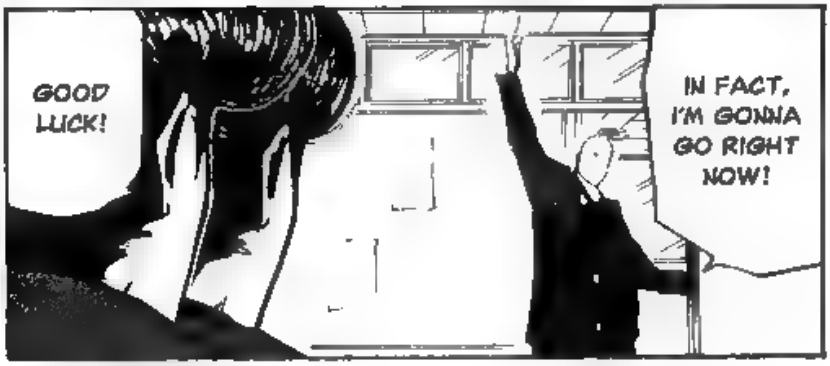

THE MORE THINGS CONSPIRE TO KEEP YOU APART, THE STRONGER THE BOND BETWEEN YOU WILL GROW. THUS, OBSTACLES SHOULD BE REGARDED AS **POSITIVE** RATHER THAN NEGATIVE.
I GET IT NOW.

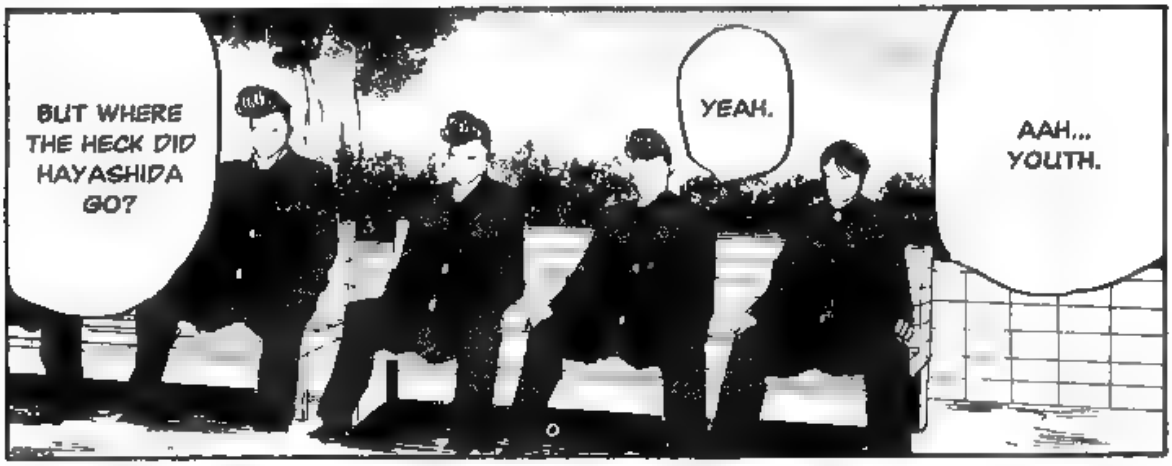
THERE ARE FAR GREATER IMPEDIMENTS IN THE WORLD, AND THROUGH THEM, YOU COULD FIND YOUR RELATIONSHIP BECOMING EVEN STRONGER.
IF I MAY BE ALLOWED TO SHARE MY OWN OPINION, I WOULD SAY THE FACT YOUR GIRLFRIEND IS ALREADY MARRIED DOESN'T CONSTITUTE AN "OBSTACLE."

FOR STARTERS, I WOULD SAY...

YEAH, I FOLLOW YOU. SO WHAT SHOULD I DO?

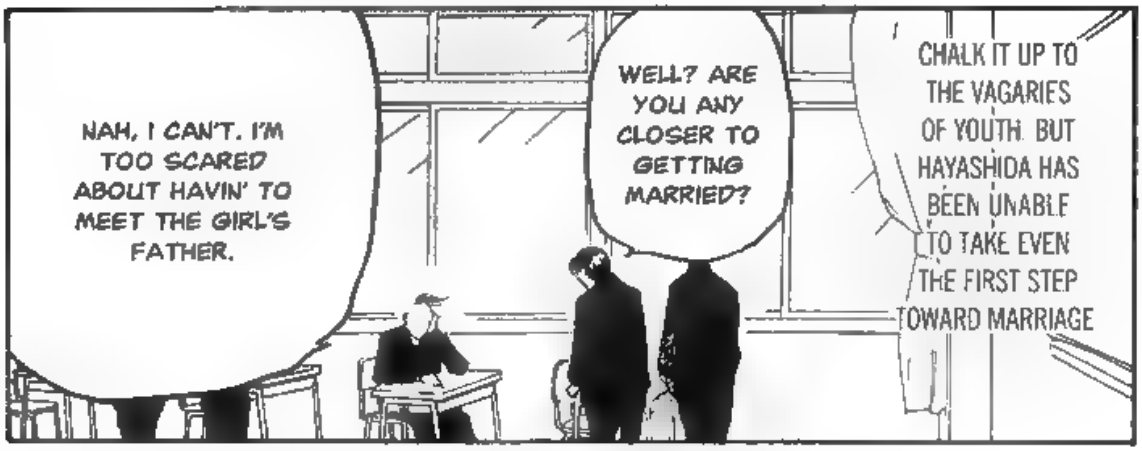


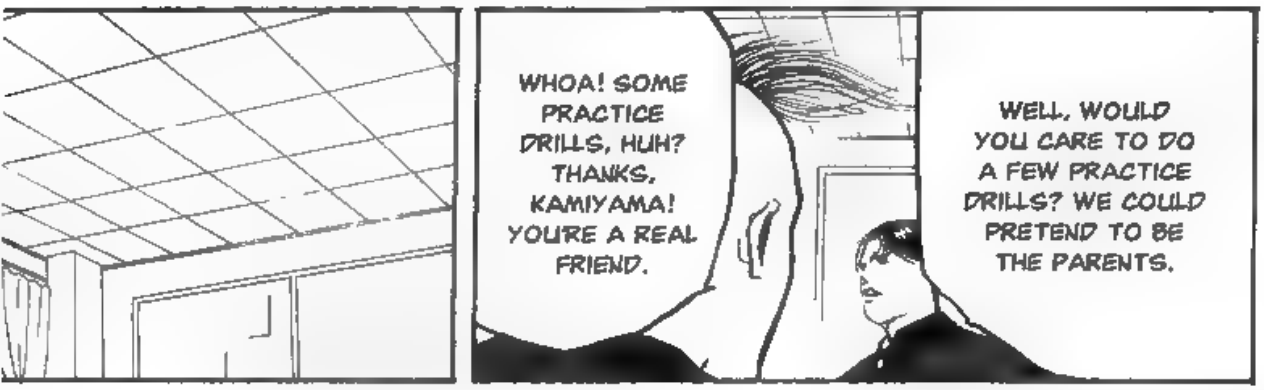




A RATHER SHOCKING TURN OF EVENTS, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?

CHAPTER 187: **FATHER'S LITTLE HELPER**


NAH, I CAN'T. I'M TOO SCARED ABOUT HAVIN' TO MEET THE GIRL'S FATHER.
WELL? ARE YOU ANY CLOSER TO GETTING MARRIED?
CHALK IT UP TO THE VAGARIES OF YOUTH. BUT HAYASHIDA HAS BEEN UNABLE TO TAKE EVEN THE FIRST STEP TOWARD MARRIAGE


WHOA! SOME PRACTICE DRILLS, HUH? THANKS, KAMIYAMA! YOU'RE A REAL FRIEND.
WELL, WOULD YOU CARE TO DO A FEW PRACTICE DRILLS? WE COULD PRETEND TO BE THE PARENTS.

I AM SHINJIRO HAYASHIDA. THANK YOU FOR TAKING THE TIME TO MEET WITH ME.
IT'S AN HONOR TO MEET YOU.
AHEM!
NEXT, I'D LIKE TO HAVE THE FATHER SAY A FEW WORDS.
VERY WELL DONE! BUT WE'VE ONLY JUST BEGUN. YOU MUSTN'T LET YOUR GUARD DOWN YET.
HOW WAS THAT?
CAN YOU PLEASE TRY TO TAKE THIS A LITTLE MORE SERIOUSLY? WE'RE ALL COUNTING ON YOU.
M-ME?!

UH...SO YOU'RE HAYASHIDA-KUN, EH? MY DAUGHTER'S TOLD ME A LOT ABOUT YOU. THANKS FOR COMING.
コホン、
AHEM!
LIKE?
HMM. SOME-THING'S JUST NOT RIGHT.
. . . . . .
MOM
DEAR, BRING OUT SOME TEA, WOULD YOU?
NO, THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH THAT. THIS IS JUST PRACTICE.
Though that IS a little "off."
IT'S NOT 'CUZ WE'VE GOT A GORILLA SERVING TEA, RIGHT?
OH, I GETCHA.
IT'S AS IF SOMETHING'S A LITTLE... OFF.
OK, SURE.
I FEEL AS IF THAT'S NOT QUITE COMING ACROSS. WOULD YOU MIND PLEASE KEEPING THAT IN MIND AND TRYING AGAIN?
THAT'S RIGHT.
IT'S AS MASK SAID BEFORE--THE GIRL'S FATHER COULD VERY WELL BE A STUBBORN, [illegible] EXAMPLE OF A MAN.

AH. WE'RE ALMOST AT THE END OF SUMMER.
TH-THAT WAS NO GOOD?!
NO, NO, NO! THAT'S NOT IT AT ALL! YOU'VE LET HAYASHIDA COMPLETELY DOMINATE THE PACE OF YOUR CONVERSATION!
YEAH.
IT WAS UNSEASONABLY COOL THIS YEAR, WOULDN'T YOU SAY?
Kamiyama
VERY WELL.
OK, KAMIYAMA, WHY DON'T YOU SHOW THEM HOW IT'S DONE? AND REMEMBER, HE'S GOTTA BE A STUBBORN OLD MAN.
SO THE HECK WHAT?
IT WAS UNSEASONABLY COOL THIS YEAR, WASN'T IT?
AH. WE'RE ALMOST AT THE END OF SUMMER.

THAT'S WHAT I'M TALKING ABOUT. TO A FATHER, HIS DAUGHTER IS, IN A WAY, MORE IMPORTANT THAN HIS OWN WIFE. AND NOW SOMEONE'S TRYING TO STEAL HER AWAY! AS FAR AS THE FATHER'S CONCERNED, THAT MAN IS SOMEONE TO BE DESPISED--AN ENEMY!
YOU SEE?
WHOA! WHAT A HEARTLESS REPLY! IT'S LIKE HE WANTS NOTHING TO DO WITH HIM!
THIS IS NOT A GAME, YOU KNOW.
I-I GUESS I WASN'T PUTTING VERY MUCH INTO IT EARLIER.
HAVE YOU GOT IT NOW?
THE PERSON YOU LOVE MOST OF ALL IS ABOUT TO GO FAR, FAR AWAY. IF YOU KEEP THAT IN MIND, YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO UNDERSTAND WHERE THIS OLD GUY IS COMING FROM.
I'M SORRY.
YOU NEED TO TAKE THIS SERIOUSLY.
OK. I DIDN'T REALLY GET IT EARLIER, BUT NOW I'M GOING TO GIVE IT EVERYTHING I'VE GOT. I'M GONNA BE ONE GREAT OLD GUY!

SAY, DAD. DO YOU MIND IF I ASK WHAT SOME OF YOUR HOBBIES ARE?
I DON'T REMEMBER EVER BEIN' CALLED "DAD" BY THE LIKES OF YOU!
ULP!
YES! THAT'S IT!
THAT'S KNOCKED HAYA-SHIDA OFF BALANCE!
STILL, THE ONLY REASON THAT SLIPPED OUT IS THAT I'VE BEEN THINKING IN EARNEST ABOUT MARRYING YOUR DAUGHTER.
MAR-RY...
HE SAID IT!
WATCH OUT! HAYA-SHIDA'S GOOD AT THIS!
MY APOL-OGIES. THAT WAS CARELESS OF ME.
BUT YOU'RE STILL A HIGH-SCHOOL STUDENT. WHY NOT WAIT UNTIL AFTER YOU'VE GRADUATED TO GET MARRIED? THAT'S STILL NOT VERY FAR OFF.
OH! GOOD COME-BACK!
IF YOU DON'T MIND ME SAYING SO, THE ISSUE OF MARRIAGE IS BETWEEN YOUR DAUGHTER AND MYSELF. WHEN TWO PEOPLE ARE IN LOVE, THEY CAN'T LET ANYONE GET IN THE WAY.

HM?
HAYA-SHIDA'S GOING FOR THE FORCEFUL APPROACH!
IF YOUR DAUGHER CAME OUT HERE AND SAID SHE WANTED TO GET MARRIED, WOULD YOU STILL STAND BETWEEN US?
I MAY WELL BE A SELFISH OLD MAN, BUT NO MATTER WHAT ANYONE SAYS...
SMACK
HUH?
HE'S CRY-ING!
LET YOU MARRY MY DAUGH-TER!
I WILL NEVER...

HAYASHIDA'S PLAN TO GET MARRIED CONTINUES...

VOLUME 8 ★ THE END

CROMARTIE HIGH SCHOOL VOLUME EIGHT

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